Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Report on the Inquiry into Building a United Community – Volume One

Together with Minutes of Proceedings relating to the Report and Minutes of Evidence

Ordered by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to be printed on 1 July 2015

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THE REPORT REMAINS EMBARGOED UNTIL COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY.

Mandate 2011/16

Fifteenth Report - NIA 257/11-16

Membership and Powers

Powers

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is a Statutory Committee established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, Section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Assembly Standing Order 48. The Committee has a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and has a role in the initiation of legislation.

The Committee has the power to;

- consider and advise on Departmental Budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Membership

The Committee has eleven members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five members.

The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Mr. Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)[1,2]
Mr. Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr. Alex Attwood[14]
Mr. Michael Copeland[3,10,11,12,16,17]
Miss Megan Fearon[5]
Mrs. Brenda Hale[8]
Mr. Alex Maskey
Ms. Bronwyn McGahan[6]
Mr. David McIlveen[15]
Mr. Stephen Moutray[7]
Mr. Jimmy Spratt[4,9,13]

1 With effect from 26 September 2011 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Ms Sandra Overend
2 With effect from 17 April 2012 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Mr Tom Elliott as Chairperson
3 With effect from 23 April 2012 Mr Danny Kinahan was appointed to the committee
4 With effect from 21 May 2012 Mr Tom Buchanan replaced Mr Jimmy Spratt
5 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Megan Fearon replaced Mr Francie Molloy
6 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Bronwyn McGahan replaced Ms Caitriona Ruane
7 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Stephen Moutray replaced Mr William Humphrey
8 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mrs Brenda Hale replaced Mr Trevor Clarke
9 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Paul Givan replaced Mr Tom Buchanan
10 With effect from 15 October 2012 Mr John McCallister replaced Mr Danny Kinahan
11 With effect from 25 February 2013 Mr Robin Swann replaced Mr John McCallister
12 With effect from 11 March 2013 Mr Leslie Cree replaced Mr Robin Swann
13 With effect from 15 April 2013 Mr Jimmy Spratt replaced Mr Paul Givan
14 With effect from 07 October 2013 Mr Alex Attwood replaced Mr Colum Eastwood
15 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr David McIlveen replaced Mr George Robinson
16 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Roy Beggs replaced Mr Leslie Cree
17 With effect from 13 October 2014 Mr Michael Copeland replaced Mr Roy Beggs

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List of Abbreviations

ACNI	Arts Council Northern Ireland
AoH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
BCDA	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
BCRC	Ballymoney Community Resource Centre
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
BRIC	Building Relationships in Communities
CAJ	Committee on the Administration of Justice
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERD	Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CoE	Council of Europe
CRED	Community Relations and Diversity in Education
CRIS	Community Relations in Schools
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CLC	Children's Law Centre
CoE	Council of Europe
CRC	Community Relations Council
CR/CD	Community Relations / Community Development
CRED	Community Relations Equality and Diversity
CSI	Cohesion, Sharing and Integration
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DCGRP	District Councils Good Relations Programme
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DOE	Department of the Environment
DoJ	Department of Justice
DPCSP	District Policing and Community Safety Partnership
DPP	District Policing Partnership
DRD	Department for Regional Development
DSD	Department for Social Development
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECNI	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
EWL	European Women's Lobby
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FETO	Fair Employment and Treatment Order
FSME	Free School Meals Entitlement
GB	Great Britain
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
GRMF	Good Relations Measurement Framework

GRO	Good Relations Officer
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICR	Institute for Conflict Research
ICRED	International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
IRFU	Irish Rugby Football Association
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
LGD	Local Government District
LGR	Local Government Reform
LINI	Landscape Institute Northern Ireland
LORAG	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group
MIFC	Media Initiative for Children
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NBCAU	North Belfast Community Action Unit
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NICEM	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NILGA	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIYF	Northern Ireland Youth Forum
NUS – USI	National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
PCSP	Policing and Community Safety Partnership
PfG	Programme for Government
PHA	Public Health Agency
PSNI	Police Service for Northern Ireland
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RCN	Rural Community Network
RoI	Republic of Ireland
RRO	Race Relations Order
RUC GC	Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
SF	Sinn Fein
SIB	Strategic Investment Board
SOLACE	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers
T:BUC	Together: Building a United Community
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPRG	Ulster Political Research Group
WHO	World Health Organisation
YCNI	Youth Council Northern Ireland
YLT	Young Life and Times

Executive Summary

Together: Building a United Community is the Executive's strategy, launched in May 2013, to achieve *"a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, freed from prejudice, hate and intolerance."*

Noting its long term nature, the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister agreed in September 2013 that scrutiny of this strategy should form one of its strategic priorities. This developed into the consideration of an Inquiry to seek to inform the Executive's approach to building a united and shared society. The Committee agreed its terms of reference for an Inquiry into Building a United Community in July 2014. The Inquiry is not intended as a review of the T:BUC strategy, but an opportunity for Members to hear from government, statutory agencies, the community and voluntary sector and interested individuals; and make recommendations to support and enhance policy in building a united community.

Led by the themes emerging through written and oral evidence from a diverse range of stakeholders, the Committee has considered a wide variety of issues and challenges, from funding through to opportunities for sharing good practice; from shared space through to the role of local government in building a united community. The Committee acknowledges the passion, energy and enthusiasm that many individuals bring to developing the vision of a united community within their own spheres of influence, and wishes to thank all those who have participated through written submissions, oral evidence and attending stakeholder events. Whilst tensions between communities, particularly at urban interfaces, often attract negative press, there are many positive stories to share of efforts to build a united and shared community, which often take place all year round.

What has been clear to Members throughout the Inquiry process is that there is no single approach to building a united community. Each local community requires a uniquely tailored approach, and programmes and initiatives must be flexible enough to accommodate these nuances whilst still working towards the same goal.

What also became evident through Members' engagement with practitioners was the burden placed on organisations and individuals through short-term funding cycles. The Committee acknowledges the financial pressures currently faced by all those reliant on public funding due to the uncertain economic climate, but also recognises the importance of placing funding mechanisms targeted at building a united community on a more stable footing in order to achieve the objectives outlined in T:BUC.

The Committee also noted renewed energy around the involvement of local communities in decision making and policy development, particularly with regard to the introduction of community planning as a key power of the new District Councils. The Committee recognises the pivotal role that local government can and should play in supporting and enhancing policy to unite communities.

This report represents the first time that a Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly has undertaken extensive scrutiny of these matters. The Committee notes the words of the First Minister who, in launching T:BUC, said *"It would be idealistic to think that any initiative, no matter how significant, can heal all of society's divisions and problems"*. Similarly this report is not the end of the conversation; but having considered the evidence presented, the Committee has proposed a number of recommendations which it hopes will contribute to the ongoing discussions and development of policy aimed at building a united community.

Key Conclusions and Recommendations

General comments on "Together: Building a United Community"

1. The Committee notes the publication of Together: Building a United Community as a devolved strategy aimed at improving community relations and building a united and shared society. The Committee commends those individuals and organisations working towards building a united community, and the Government Departments and statutory agencies that support them in this work.

2. The Committee acknowledges that many different activities across all Departments do make a contribution to building a shared and united society, whether or not they are specifically badged as good relations activity. What is important, however, is that there is a joined-up approach across the Executive to ensure the best outcomes possible.

3. The Committee recognises the important role of the Ministerial Panel, not least because working towards building a united community is not confined to the remit of just one Department, and it is vital that these issues are regularly considered at this level. The Committee stresses the need for regular meetings of the Ministerial Panel with transparent outcomes; and recommends that OFMDFM lay an annual report on T:BUC in the NI Assembly, with contributions from other Departments, as the basis for an annual 'take note' debate. This would allow an opportunity for progress to be identified and recognised, and for good news stories to be heard.

4. The Committee recommends that all NI Assembly statutory committees make it core business to include good relations as part of their regular scrutiny of departmental activity, including the monitoring of T:BUC headline actions where Departments have responsibility for delivery.

Consultation and Co-design

5. The Committee considers that, ideally, stakeholders should have the ability to shape policy at a formative stage before key decisions are made and policy documents are written. However, the Committee supports the process of co-design in principle as a positive way to engage with stakeholders in the design and implementation of programmes. Given the long term nature of many of the headline actions, the Committee considers it important that this engagement is meaningful and continues through the lifetime of the strategy. The Committee therefore recommends that OFMDFM consider the creation of a "T:BUC Forum" as an opportunity for the sector to engage constructively with the Department. The Committee suggests the "NEETS Forum" established by the Department for Employment and Learning as a useful model in this regard. Should such a forum be established, it is recommended that it is chaired by a representative from the sector.

Building a United Community: Theory and Practice

6. The Committee acknowledges, and commends, the positive working relationship between the Department and academic experts who have a particular interest in researching issues related to sectarianism, division and the pursuit of good relations; and notes that good, helpful research is regularly produced. However the Committee is surprised that this work does not seem to be widely disseminated or receive local recognition. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM proactively seeks ways to share this expertise across Departments; and explores opportunities to promote and publish this academic work as extensively as possible.

7. The Committee recognises that programmes and initiatives that work in a particular geographical area may not automatically be appropriate for another location. However the Committee strongly urges those designing policy and initiatives to further a united and shared society to look to best practice available locally and build on the learning and expertise that already exists during the early stages of policy development.

Definitions and Terminology

8. The Committee notes the support from the written evidence received and through the stakeholder event for the introduction of definitions for 'sectarianism' and 'good relations.' The Committee recognises that agreed definitions are useful for the purposes of the monitoring and evaluation of T:BUC programmes, and that the proper place for defining these terms is in the context of legislation. The Committee therefore supports the intention of Ministers, stated within Together: Building a United Community, to *"seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism, based on this Strategy."*

Resourcing T:BUC

9. The Committee recognises the constrained financial situation within which all Departments are seeking to deliver on programmes and priorities and encourages the Executive not to lose sight of priorities to support building a united and shared community amongst other budgetary pressures. In addition the Committee supports the development of a budget profile for each headline action across the lifetime of the strategy, with associated milestones to add transparency to the T:BUC expenditure.

10. The Committee notes that T:BUC recognises that work is required to ensure the allocation of good relations funding is in line with strategic objectives, and also with any future funding model. However the Committee is also aware that delays in terms of receipt of funding, alongside short-term funding cycles, can create uncertainty. The Committee recommends that the Funders' Advisory Group, which will be established to sit alongside the Ministerial Panel, is brought forward as soon as possible to progress work on the review of good relations funding and the development of a good relations funding model. In developing this model the Committee recommends that OFMDFM takes account of the burden faced by individuals and organisations through short-term funding cycles and considers ways to alleviate these pressures. The Committee also recommends that the Department works to promote transparency in allocation of funding at departmental level, and also through local councils and arm's-length bodies.

11. The Committee recognises the wisdom, both in terms of public expenditure and strategic planning, of piloting initiatives under the headline actions of T:BUC. However the Committee considers that it is important, not least in terms of the potential for increased confidence in the T:BUC strategy, that programmes and initiatives are moved from the pilot phase to solid state as soon as is practically possible, with those projects that are successful up-scaled appropriately.

District Council Good Relations Programme

12. The Committee acknowledges the valuable contribution that local government has made, and continues to make, to building a united and shared community across Northern Ireland. Members also welcome the inclusion of the District Council Good Relations Programme within the Together: Building a United Community strategy, and recognise the flexibility the programme affords to local councils to work out what building good relations means in the context of their own areas.

13. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM continues to support the District Council Good Relations Programme, and specifically through the ongoing implementation of the NISRA Evaluation Report recommendations; ensuring that letters of offer with regard to the DCGRP are issued at the start of a new financial year; and continuing to provide high quality support from OFMDFM officials.

14. The Committee also recognises the potential of the District Council Good Relations Programme to make small scale interventions in local communities, which can have a major impact. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM reviews the District Council small grants scheme to ensure consistency of provision across local government, and to ensure that these funds are maximised to deliver positive good relations outcomes.

15. Whist recognising that one size does not fit all, the Committee recommends that opportunities to share best practice between local government areas should be enhanced, through opportunities for increased face to face interactions between Good Relations Officers and harnessing new technologies, for example through an online resource bank. The Committee also recommends that the annual reports prepared by each District Council as part of their monitoring and evaluation obligations with OFMDFM are circulated widely amongst those involved in the DCGRP to further the development of that programme.

Community Planning and the Involvement of Communities in Decision Making

16. The Committee notes the perception that the role women have played in building peace has not always been acknowledged by policy makers, and the view that this is also true of the Together: Building a United Community strategy document. Discussion on building shared and safe communities should acknowledge and promote the participation of women in politics and wider peacebuilding.

17. With regard to wider policy development and decision making the Committee recognises that, for some groups, access to elected representatives, government departments and statutory agencies can be difficult. The Committee recommends therefore that OFMDFM brings forward policy development guidance for Departments which ensures that policy and decision makers develop and maintain a clear focus on identifying hard to reach groups; and that they assess and meet their capacity needs recognising that this may, at times, require external facilitation.

18. The Committee acknowledges that local communities have an important part to play in decision making relating to their own areas and notes that community planning has the potential to allow communities to influence decision making in their areas. The Committee recognises that responsibility for community planning rests with local councils and the Department of the Environment and recommends that the First Minister and deputy First Minister work with the Minister of the Environment to ensure that community planning as a departmental priority is focused on the aims and objectives of T:BUC, which could include the inclusion of a specific commitment in the next Programme for Government. The Committee also strongly encourages the Committee for the Environment to monitor the implementation and development of community planning as a vehicle for communities to be involved in decision making, with good relations at its core.

Exploring Shared Issues: Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme

19. The Committee recognises the merit in bringing groups together around issues of common concern like parenting, supporting children through education, or a shared anxiety around drug and alcohol misuse; and commends the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme as an innovative approach to building good relations between communities. The Committee recommends that the Department gives full consideration to the evaluation of the Contested

Spaces/Interfaces Programme and applies the learning to the development of future programmes and initiatives, including prioritising areas for funding.

Single Identity Approach

20. The Committee acknowledges that there are different views about the role of single identity work in building a united and shared community. The Committee recognises the importance of respecting the pace at which people are willing to travel in relation to building a united community, and that this will differ depending on local circumstances. The Committee therefore recommends that single identity groups are provided with the tools to build confidence and capacity; and, at the same time, are helped to understand the value of moving beyond a single identity approach, and provided with opportunities for this to happen.

Shared Space

21. The Committee acknowledges the creative and innovative ways in which some organisations and community groups are creating shared space. The Committee believes that shared space has meaning where it offers something purposeful and is not created artificially around a contrived concept. The Committee recognises the role which the Department of the Environment can play in shaping the built environment, most recently through the Living Spaces Design Guide, and welcomes the proposal that further clarification will be brought forward within the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement. The Committee therefore recommends that the development of meaningful shared space is incorporated as an essential component in delivering a united and shared community.

Relationship Building and Trust

22. The Committee notes that time is needed to build relationships, respect and trust between all those involved in building a united community, and that this process is often more untidy than neatly defined funding cycles. The Committee also expresses its concern regarding the high level of burnout affecting those working within the sector, including a heavy reliance on specific individuals, albeit individuals with enthusiasm and passion for the task in hand. The Committee therefore recommends that Departments, arm's-length bodies, and statutory agencies have an appropriate support mechanism in place for the organisations that they are funding; and that they strongly encourage their funded organisations to consider suitable succession planning.

23. The Committee recommends that the Department gives consideration to adopting the term 'good relationships' as a broader framework in which to consider delivering policies and programmes to promote a united and shared society.

Urban Interfaces

24. The Committee recognises that the issues that need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed are complex, and like other areas of good relations work, there is no uniform approach. The Committee notes the concerns of those living immediately beside interface areas who feel that the physical barriers provide a certain amount of security and safety; recognises that malevolent forces continue to have influence in some communities, which in turn contributes to the desire to maintain physical manifestations of division in urban areas; and acknowledges the challenge in communicating a vision for a united and shared society to communities at interfaces. The Committee commends the consultation and preparatory work that is ongoing with regard to the commitment within Together: Building a United Community to reduce the number of interface barriers, in conjunction with local communities. The Committee respects the views of those who do not yet feel secure enough

to progress on the removal of interface barriers, and supports the view that no peace wall should be removed without the consent and support of the communities that are living immediately beside it.

25. The Committee recommends that work to liaise with those living at interfaces to understand why they do not feel safe; and to encourage them to develop a vision for building a united and shared community continues. The Committee also encourages the Committee for Justice to undertake scrutiny of the work of the Department of Justice in this regard to ensure that the Assembly is fully appraised, and can input into this work as appropriate.

26. The Committee further notes concerns from stakeholders that too much emphasis is being placed on the removal of physical interface barriers, with little thought being given to the social and economic needs of those living closest to the peace walls. In taking this area of work forward the Committee recommends a holistic approach to the reduction of interface barriers, which might include localised regeneration initiatives, support for education and access to employment for everyone, and in particular young people.

Contested Space in Rural Communiities

27. Members commend the work of those organisations, large and small, dedicated to building a united and shared society within rural communities. The Committee notes the view that there is a lack of recognition amongst policy and decision makers that sectarianism exists in rural communities; and the view that initiatives designed to deal with issues of contested space in rural areas receive disproportionately less funding than communities at interfaces in urban areas. The Committee also acknowledges that there is a subtlety in addressing sectarianism in rural areas which may not have the same manifestations as seen in urban areas; and the perception that, historically, there has been a lack of creative thought and commitment as to how programmes designed to build a united community can be better catered for in a rural context.

28. The Committee recommends that the seven headline actions of T:BUC are rural-proofed by OFMDFM as soon as possible, and that any remedial action identified is carried out quickly. Further the Committee recommends that Executive Departments, statutory agencies and arm's-length bodies tasked with the development of programmes aimed at building a united community proactively mitigate against a perceived urban bias.

Mixed Communities

29. The Committee recommends that a greater emphasis is placed on the lessons learned by those who have something to contribute to the wider discussions about developing shared neighbourhoods; and in particular that representatives from these mixed communities should participate in the relevant thematic groups to be established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel. Further the Committee recommends that, in establishing a T:BUC forum, consideration is given to specifically inviting representatives from mixed communities to participate.

General Comments on Approaches to Addressing Sectarianism and Division

30. The Committee acknowledges the breadth and depth of approaches to addressing sectarianism and division and the rich contribution that this work makes to building a united community. The Committee recognises that there is no uniform approach to addressing sectarianism and division; and recommends that the Department continues to deploy flexibility when developing policy and devising programmes relating to these matters.

31. In considering approaches to addressing sectarianism and division the Committee notes the need for careful monitoring of the balance between the Ministerial Panel co-ordinating the processes around pursuing a united and shared community, and the community and voluntary sector which is often charged with the delivery of the outcomes of this agenda. The Committee strongly urges the Department to develop, and continue to build on, good relationships with the community and voluntary sector in this regard.

Mental Health/Intergenerational Trauma

32. The Committee acknowledges that many individuals across society in Northern Ireland cope with conflict-related mental health and trauma related issues; and that efforts to build a united and shared society require a holistic approach. The Committee recommends that the Executive undertakes closer cross-departmental consideration of issues relating to mental health and intergenerational trauma in a way that links to the trauma initiative of the Stormont House Agreement.

Good Relations Indicators

33. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM conducts an interim evaluation of Together: Building a United Community to assess the progress of the seven headline actions to identify good news stories, and to ensure that any alterations required are identified early with time to make any adjustments that may be necessary.

Introduction

Together: Building a United Community

1. On 9 May 2013 the First Minister and deputy First Minister announced a package of "significant and strategic actions"[1] as part of a broader good relations strategy, "Together: Building a United Community" (T:BUC). These actions included:

   i. The creation of 10,000 one year placements as part of the United Youth Programme;

   ii. 100 Shared Summer Schools/Camps to be held across NI by 2015 for post primary young people;

   iii. 4 Urban Village Regeneration Projects for large scale urban regeneration in targeted areas of deprivation;

   iv. 10 shared educational campuses to be commenced within 5 years;

   v. Proposals to be brought forward on 10 new shared neighbourhood developments;

   vi. Creation of a significant cross-community sports programme;

   vii. A 10 year programme to reduce, and eventually remove, all interface barriers, working together with the local community.

2. The First Minister made a statement to the Assembly on 14 May 2013 regarding the proposals during which he commented that

   "It would be idealistic to think that any initiative, no matter how significant, can heal all of society's divisions and problems, but I believe that it is a significant step forward that demonstrates our confidence that the people of Northern Ireland are determined to live, work and socialise together as a single united community."[2]

3. The "Together: Building a United Community" strategy document was published on 23 May 2013,[3] and outlines the principles to underpin the implementation of the strategy and drive forward actions at all levels of Government.

Underlying principles

4. There are eleven agreed underlying principles for the T:BUC strategy and these are detailed in the table below.

Table 1: Underlying principles of Together: Building a United Community

Cohesion	Respect
Diversity	Responsibilities
Fairness	Rights
Inclusion	Sharing
Integration	Tolerance
Interdependence	

1 http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/es/index/media-centre/executive-statements/statement-090513-together-building.htm [Accessed 30 April 2015]

2 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/official-report/reports-12-13/14-may-2013/#2 [Accessed 9 June 2015]

3 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf [Accessed 9 June 2015]

Key Priorities and Aims

5. The document also outlined the key priorities and shared aims of T:BUC.

Table 2: Key Priorities and Aims of Together: Building a United Community

Our Children and Young People	to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations
Our Shared Community	to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone
Our Safe Community	to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety
Our Cultural Expression	to create a community, which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced

Budget allocation

6. During his statement to the Assembly on 14 May 2013 the First Minister advised that "*Since devolution, approximately £500m has been spent on supporting valuable good relations work across Northern Ireland.*" He went on to say that, "*As we move forward [officials] will not only design and develop the schemes that we announced, but will cost them, as best one can*."[4]

7. However, during the course of the Inquiry, and through routine scrutiny of financial and budgetary matters by the Committee, it has not been possible to obtain a budget profile for the lifetime of T:BUC, or against each of the seven headline actions. The Committee wrote to the Department several times on this matter, and although it did receive a budget profile for the 2015/16 financial year,[5] a breakdown of funding over the lifetime of the strategy has not been provided.

Committee Approach

8. The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (COFMDFM) was briefed by Junior Ministers on Together: Building a United Community at its meeting on 22 May 2013, and by officials on two subsequent occasions, namely 25 September 2013 and 5 February 2014. At its planning meeting for the 2013/14 session in September 2013 the Committee agreed that the consideration of this document should be a strategic priority, and noted that the long term nature of the strategy could allow Members to usefully undertake a piece of work that would seek to inform the Executive's approach in this regard. In his statement on 14 May 2013 the First Minister advised Members that "*we regard it [T:BUC] very much as a living strategy… it can change, be updated and grow.*"[6]

9. In January 2014 the Committee identified two distinct areas which merited deeper scrutiny. These were the review of the Barroso Taskforce and the T:BUC strategy. At that time, in respect of T:BUC, the Committee commissioned Assembly Research to explore examples of peace building initiatives outside of Northern Ireland, with a more in-depth look at peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These research papers are available to read at **Appendix 5**. Having opted to take the European issue first, the Committee subsequently

4 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/official-report/reports-12-13/14-may-2013/#2 [Accessed 9 June 2015]

5 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 23 April 2015

6 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/official-report/reports-12-13/14-may-2013/#2 [Accessed 9 June 2015]

agreed the aim of its Inquiry into Building a United Community and the terms of reference at its meeting on 2 July 2014.[7]

Aim

10. The agreed aim of the Inquiry is to inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making.

Terms of Reference

11. The agreed terms of reference of the Inquiry are to:

i. Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:

   a. an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;

   b. consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;

ii. Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:

   a. seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;

   b. examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and

   c. consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.

iii. Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Call for evidence

12. Following agreement of the terms of reference the Committee agreed to formally call for evidence in relation to the Inquiry. Notifications were published in three local newspapers and on the Committee's webpages, and relevant stakeholders were informed by email with an invitation to respond by Friday 26 September 2014. At its meeting on 17 September 2014 the Committee agreed to extend the closing date for written submissions to Friday 10 October 2014.[8]

13. The Committee was pleased to receive over 70 written submissions from a variety of sectors including government departments, statutory agencies and a range of voluntary and community sector organisations. These submissions were published on the Committee's webpages during the course of the Inquiry and are available to view at **Appendix 3**.

7 Appendix 1: Minutes of Proceedings

8 Appendix 1: Minutes of Proceedings

Evidence gathering

14. At its meeting on 5 November 2014 the Committee considered the themes emerging from the written submissions which were wide-ranging, reflecting the diversity of organisations and individuals that responded. At that meeting Members noted that the Committee for Education was undertaking an Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education, and restated its position, first agreed on 1 October 2014, that any issues arising in the course of the Inquiry into Building a United Community relating to education, should be passed to that Committee for information.

15. The Committee noted that a number of organisations had responded specifically to the Inquiry on the matter of a definition for the term 'good relations' and also 'sectarianism'. Members agreed not to explore this issue in detail through oral evidence, but to revisit issues relating to a definition of good relations at a later stage. Other emerging themes in the written evidence included issues relating to mental health and inter-generational trauma. The Committee agreed that, while these areas are both important and merit further consideration, it would be unlikely that the Committee would be able to consider them in depth during the course of the Inquiry.

16. With those considerations in mind, the Committee identified witnesses to be invited to provide oral evidence to the Committee. The Committee also decided to host a stakeholder event with those who had provided written evidence; agreed to an informal meeting with young people; and asked staff to explore the possibility of external meetings at an interface area and in a rural area. Members also identified a number of academics to invite to give oral evidence, following consideration of a paper from Assembly Research. Due to time constraints the Committee opted not to undertake a study visit outside of Northern Ireland as part of its evidence gathering. The minutes of proceedings of the Committee's consideration of the Inquiry at all stages can be found at **Appendix 1**; Minutes of Evidence from the oral evidence sessions can be found at **Appendix 2**; and the reports from the two events are available at **Appendix 6**. Again, the Committee made all this information available during the course of the Inquiry on its webpages.

Deliberations

17. Having collated the evidence received through written submissions, oral evidence sessions and during the stakeholder events the Committee considered an issues paper at its meeting on 25 March, and released it to OFMDFM prior to a final evidence session with departmental officials on Wednesday 13 May. At that meeting officials had an opportunity to respond to the key issues emerging from the evidence. The Committee considered areas for potential recommendations at its meeting on 3 June, and tasked staff to prepare an initial draft report including the findings and draft recommendations as discussed by Members. The Committee considered the initial draft report at its meeting on 24 June 2015.

18. The Committee's report on the Inquiry was agreed at its meeting on 1 July 2015, and a motion for debate in plenary, to be scheduled for early in the 2015/16 session, was also agreed that day.

19. The Committee would wish to express its sincere thanks to all those organisations and individuals who have engaged with this Inquiry, and departmental officials for responding to queries which arose during the course of its consideration.

20. During the course of this Inquiry the Committee noted that the Stormont House Agreement included a commitment that:

> *"The Northern Ireland Executive will ensure full implementation of the Together: Building a United Community strategy, and beyond that will commit to a continuing effort to eradicate sectarianism in all its forms."*[9]

21. Members also noted the announcement by the First Minister to the Assembly on Monday 2 March 2015[10] regarding the proposed names and structures of future departments within the Northern Ireland Executive. Under the proposals responsibility for the delivery and operational aspects of Building a United Community will transfer from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to the proposed Department of Communities. It is the Committee's view that the recommendations of this Inquiry could helpfully inform the future design and delivery of policies and programmes aimed at building a united community in Northern Ireland.

9 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/390672/Stormont_House_Agreement.pdf [Accessed 25 June 2015]

10 http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2015/03/02&docID=226152 [Accessed 25 June 2015

Consideration of the Evidence

General Comments on "Together: Building a United Community"

22. A wide variety of the Committee's stakeholders responded positively to the publication of "Together: Building a United Community". The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, for example, stated that it is pleased with the explicit recognition in T:BUC of the huge importance of a forward looking, cohesive society.[11] Feedback from the stakeholder event indicated that some welcomed T:BUC as a promising strategy with a good vision, being led at a strategic level.

23. During oral evidence Professor Hamber from Ulster University commended the Executive for "*this bold vision and the steps that they have started to take to realise that.*" He went on to say that:

> *"It is also right that, as the strategy says, this is understood as a journey towards a more united and shared society. The idea of a journey is consistent with the notion of process, and most of the international literature on peace building and reconciliation talks about concepts as essentially processes, rather than destinations in themselves."*[12]

24. Similarly representatives of organisations working in Derry/Londonderry told the Committee that:

> *"We are fully aware that it [T:BUC] is the strategy that is in place to help positively to shape our society for the future, and we are committed to working with OFMDFM and other partners to strive towards a society that is, as stated in the document, a united community based on equality of opportunity, desirability of good relations and reconciliation."*[13]

25. During oral evidence the Chairperson of the Community Relations Council (CRC) noted that "*T:BUC is a devolved document. That is an achievement in itself. It provides a framework*." This was echoed by the Chief Executive of CRC who welcomed T:BUC as a "*large-scale intervention.*"[14]

26. The terms of reference for the Inquiry included 'consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services'. Through all the evidence the Committee received it was evident to Members that a huge amount of work takes place at departmental, statutory and community level with the purpose of building a united community. While it would be impossible to list all the examples of the work which Members considered throughout the course of this Inquiry, it is worth highlighting a few to give a flavour of the diversity of the programmes on offer. Further examples can be found in both the oral and written evidence received by the Committee at **Appendices 2** and **3** respectively.

11 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Presbyterian Church in Ireland

12 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Pete Shirlow & Professor Bandon Hamber

13 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction & Holywell Trust

14 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project and Groundwork NI

Table 3: Examples of programmes and initiatives working towards building a united community

GAA/IFA/IRFU (Ulster Branch Game of Three Halves (GO3H)/ Belfast Interface Games (BIG)	The GO3H is a collaborative partnership between Ulster GAA, the IFA and the IRFU (Ulster Branch) that aims to provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to have positive interactions through sport. The BIG uses the model of GO3H to deliver a summer intervention programme in partnership with the three disciplines and PeacePlayers International NI (PPINI). The purpose of the programme is to offer young people the opportunity to participate in Gaelic Football, Rugby Union and Soccer in a summer camp setting. A number of sport themed good relations workshops are delivered during the camps.
Inter Action Belfast Mobile Phone Network Interface violence/incidents protocols	The Mobile Phone Network was established in 1996 as an innovative, organic project designed to address sectarian incidents and violence at interface areas. Phones were distributed to a diverse group of voluntary community activists. When an incident occurred phone holders would contact each other across the interface in order to resolve the issues that had contributed to the outbreak. A set of protocols were developed in 2006 with both communities and the local district police for joint dealing with interface violence and incidents of intimidation.
Armoy Community Association	The development of shared community space which now incorporates Surestart programmes, a community pharmacy, hair salon and Mother and Toddler groups.
Strabane District Council - Good Relations Partnership	The Good Relations Partnership is an interagency group that oversees the work of the Good Relations section of Strabane District Council. The purpose of the Partnership is to provide a forum for local civic, commercial, statutory and community representatives to discuss how to progress the development of local communities in an environment where religious, political, racial and cultural expression and differences are understood and expressed in a way that is sensitive to others. The partnership consists of elected members, community representatives, a BME representative and a representative from the LGBT sector. The following agencies are represented: PSNI, NIHE, Western Health and Social Care Trust, WELB and DoE Roads Service.
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure - Droichead Projcet	An integral part of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture events programme was a cross-community event which brought together communities to ensure that the Fleadh, Tattoo, and Pan Celtic Festival showcased both traditional Irish and Ulster Scots marching bands culture.

27. **The Committee notes the publication of Together: Building a United Community as a devolved strategy aimed at improving community relations and building a united and shared society. The Committee commends those individuals and organisations working towards building a united community, and the Government Departments and statutory agencies that support them in this work.**

Narrow focus

28. That said, concern was expressed by some giving evidence to the Committee that T:BUC is too narrowly focused on divisions between the two main communities in Northern Ireland. This was reflected in the submission from the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership which considered that this approach risked sending a message that the only cultures and diversity which are to be protected are the two majority communities in Northern Ireland.[15] This view was also reflected by some attending the stakeholder event, while the young people from the Bytes project who attended an informal stakeholder event with Members also advised that "*there are more than Catholic and Protestant – there are other groups*."[16]

29. Additionally, during the stakeholder event Members heard that while the T:BUC vision was considered to be ambitious, there was little public confidence that anything would change or that there would be delivery on commitments. At the event a concern was also expressed that the headline actions do not go far enough to meet the vision and aspirations of the strategy, and that the headline actions will not create sustainable outcomes.

30. There was also a perception that initiatives included in T:BUC to address sectarianism and division are simply existing government initiatives repackaged as good relations activity. This was a view expressed during the stakeholder event and echoed during oral evidence:

> *"Some of the headline actions here read as though some Departments will do some of this stuff anyway, so they will rebadge it as good relations."*[17]

31. **The Committee acknowledges that many different activities across all Departments do make a contribution to building a shared and united society, whether or not they are specifically badged as good relations activity. What is important, however, is that there is a joined-up approach across the Executive to ensure the best outcomes possible.** This latter point is explored further through discussion on the Ministerial Panel later in this report.

Consultation and co-design

32. Another recurring theme raised in oral and written evidence as well as through the stakeholder event was that, despite the good work that already exists, there was a lack of consultation in preparation for the publication of T:BUC and a lack of recognition of current work being undertaken across the voluntary, community and statutory sector in this area. Some attending the stakeholder event suggested that those with relevant expertise were not asked for their input into the delivery of T:BUC outcomes, although this view was countered by those who felt that the co-design process implemented for the development of the headline actions was a good opportunity for the community and voluntary sector to be heard.

33. During oral evidence the groups from Derry/Londonderry expressed the view that *"it would have been nice to have been able to share our experience and to have had a constructive conversation in which we could have outlined what is happening at grass-roots level."*[18] This was echoed by groups working at urban interfaces in Belfast who suggested that:

> *"T:BUC misses out completely on two things that do not cost a lot: the ordinary people who are prepared to pay a personal rather than a financial price to achieve progress; and the home-grown mechanisms developed from learned and lived experiences on interfaces."*[19]

34. This view was not confined to organisations working within urban areas. During the Committee's visit to Ballymoney Members also heard from organisations working in

15 Appendix 3: Written Submissions - Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

16 Appendix 6: Other Papers and Correspondence - Bytes Project: Informal event

17 Appendix 6: Other Papers and Correspondence - Stakeholder Event

18 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction & Holywell Trust

19 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - InterAction Belfast, Suffolk Community Group & Forthspring InterCommunity Group

predominantly rural areas that "*one criticism we might make of the strategy is that there is not enough involvement at civic and community level for us to inform some of the ideas as to how T:BUC might be rolled out*."[20] However, it is important to note that this is not a universal experience and the Rural Community Network (RCN) in particular cited a very positive working relationship with the Department, including opportunities to feed in at various times to discussions regarding the development and roll out of T:BUC.

35. In response to these criticisms the Committee notes the following commitments within the T:BUC strategy document regarding the design of strategy implementation:

- Establish a Panel comprising all Ministers from the Executive in addition to senior representatives from a range of statutory agencies and community partners;
- Establish thematic subgroups under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel to reflect the key priorities of this strategy; and
- Ensure that the membership of both the Ministerial Panel and associated subgroups will seek to reflect the range of sectors across our community who can contribute to building good relations here.[21]

36. In evidence to the Committee in May 2015 departmental officials advised that the Ministerial Panel is supported by an inter-departmental programme board, alongside proposals for thematic subgroups, with the Housing and Community Tensions subgroups in operation by June 2015. Officials also advised that NICVA, SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) and NIHE were represented on the Ministerial panel.[22] Following an evidence session on Programme for Government (PfG) targets on 10 June 2015, officials have committed to provide more detail to the Committee of how the CRC feeds into the work of the Ministerial Panel. This information was not available in time for completion of this Report.

37. **The Committee recognises the important role of the Ministerial Panel, not least because working towards building a united community is not confined to the remit of just one Department, and it is vital that these issues are regularly considered at this level. The Committee stresses the need for regular meetings of the Ministerial Panel with transparent outcomes; and recommends that OFMDFM lay an annual report on T:BUC in the NI Assembly, with contributions from other Departments, as the basis for an annual 'take note' debate. This would allow an opportunity for progress to be identified and recognised, and for good news stories to be heard.**

38. **Following on from this, the Committee recommends that all NI Assembly statutory committees make it core business to include good relations as part of their regular scrutiny of departmental activity, including the monitoring of T:BUC headline actions where Departments have responsibility for delivery.**

39. The Committee notes that a "co-design" process has been employed by the lead Departments for a number of the key actions. In its response to the Committee, the Department for Employment and Learning advised that co-design "*involves end users and programme deliverers in every stage of the policy/programme design process*"[23]; and the Department's engagement in respect of the United Youth Programme was cited by attendees at the stakeholder event as a positive example of a good co-design process. OFMDFM has also undertaken a co-design approach with regard to summer camps and the Department of Justice has been actively working with communities at interfaces with regard to the proposed reduction in physical interface barriers. Those attending the stakeholder event noted that

20 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Rural Community Network

21 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.30 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

22 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 13 May 2015

23 Appendix 3: Written Submissions - Department for Employment and Learning

engagement on a specific issue like interface barriers may be more straightforward as the motivation behind the headline action is clearer to see.

40. In evidence to the Committee officials advised that:

> *"The approach that we have used through co-design has involved more of a blank page and saying 'Here is what we are trying to do. Here's the outcome that we are trying to get to which is linked to T:BUC. Now, tell us from your experience how that can best be designed and delivered'."*[24]

41. This was a key area discussed during the stakeholder event and, while co-design was described as the latest iteration of consultation and partnership, some felt that it did promote the active engagement of communities. And while not a panacea, it was acknowledged that co-design does have the potential to engage groups that do not normally get involved.

42. **The Committee considers that, ideally, stakeholders should have the ability to shape policy at a formative stage before key decisions are made and policy documents are written. However, the Committee supports the process of co-design in principle as a positive way to engage with stakeholders in the design and implementation of programmes. Given the long term nature of many of the headline actions, the Committee considers it important that this engagement is meaningful and continues through the lifetime of the strategy. The Committee therefore recommends that OFMDFM consider the creation of a "T:BUC Forum" as an opportunity for the sector to engage constructively with the Department. The Committee suggests the "NEETS Forum" established by the Department for Employment and Learning as a useful model in this regard. Should such a forum be established, it is recommended that it is chaired by a representative from the sector.**

Building a United Community: Theory and Practice

Academic Research and Good Practice

43. In its terms of reference the Committee sought information on theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services; and on best practice, both locally and internationally in bringing divided communities together in developing shared services. Through written and oral evidence the Committee identified a constructive working relationship between OFMDFM and relevant academics; and noted that OFMDFM plays a proactive role in the research that it commissions. However, it was not clear how widely this research is disseminated and this was summed up by Professor Pete Shirlow who told the Committee:

> *"OFMDFM has played a role in the research it has commissioned. There is a series of pieces of research commissioned that show us exactly what the problem is… I would be surprised if the OFMDFM research were known by all MLAs. Are they aware of the research that has been done? Maybe that is an issue."*[25]

44. Conversely the Committee also heard from some organisations, often visited as part of broader international study visits focused on peace and reconciliation, that they find themselves ignored when policy is developed at a local level. Michael Doherty from the Peace and Reconciliation Group told Members that "*many people do not understand some of the work that we have been involved in, because they do not know about it*."[26] During the stakeholder event held in January 2015 an organisation heavily involved in developing and providing summer camps for a number of years indicated that it had not been approached by OFMDFM for advice or input into the development of the T:BUC summer camps initiative.

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24 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Departmental officials 13 May 2015

25 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

26 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction & Holywell Trust

45. As noted elsewhere in this report, the Committee recognises that one size does not fit all and that best practice in one community may not automatically transfer to a different location. However the learning from these programmes and initiatives should be captured to inform future policy and shape potential interventions.

46. **The Committee acknowledges, and commends, the positive working relationship between the Department and academic experts who have a particular interest in researching issues related to sectarianism, division and the pursuit of good relations; and notes that good, helpful research is regularly produced. However the Committee is surprised that this work does not seem to be widely disseminated or receive local recognition. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM proactively seeks ways to share this expertise across Departments; and explores opportunities to promote and publish this academic work as extensively as possible.**

47. **The Committee recognises that programmes and initiatives that work in a particular geographical area may not automatically be appropriate for another location. However the Committee strongly urges those designing policy and initiatives to further a united and shared society to look to best practice available locally and build on the learning and expertise that already exists during the early stages of policy development.**

Definitions and Terminology

48. In its terms of reference the Committee sought views on what good relations means. Whilst the Committee did not subsequently pursue this in detail through oral evidence, a number of organisations addressed this matter specifically in their written submissions and it was also discussed during the stakeholder event.

49. T:BUC refers to Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) which states that:

> *"without prejudice to its obligations under Section 75 (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group."*[27]

50. For the purposes of the strategy sectarianism is defined as "*threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour or attitudes towards a person by reasons of that person's religious belief or political opinion; or to an individual as a member of such a group*."[28] However, the strategy document goes on to indicate that legislation to establish the Equality and Good Relations Commission will seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism, based on the strategy, to be included in that legislation.

51. At the time of completing this report the legislation has not been forthcoming. However, it may be useful to articulate some of the views of those responding to the Inquiry on defining terms.

52. Overall there was strong support for agreed definitions for 'sectarianism' and 'good relations', including from the Equality Commission and RCN; and agreed definitions could, according to Co-operation Ireland, *"become a driver of change in policy and practice."*[29]

53. The Children's Law Centre (CLC) indicated its support for this approach as it believes that clarity of law and measurement of success can only be achieved through the adoption of a clear definition. This was a view echoed by the Committee for the Administration of Justice (a submission endorsed by UNISON) which suggested that it is contradictory to suggest that good relations is both highly important, but impossible to define.[30]

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27 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.14 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

28 Ibid p.19

29 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Equality Commission for Northern Ireland; Rural Community Network; Co-operation Ireland

30 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Children's Law Centre; Committee for the Administration of Justice

54. CRC recommended that definitions of good relations and sectarianism should conform to international standards, a view supported by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), Youth Council NI, Holywell Trust, Peace and Reconciliation Group and the Junction; while Co-operation Ireland pointed to the work of Brandon Hamber and Gráinne Kelly as a useful starting point in framing an agreed definition of good relations.[31]

55. Some highlighted a perceived tension between the statutory equality duty and wider good relations obligations with concern expressed by some, including the Equality Coalition that a focus on good relations may be to the detriment of equality obligations. The Equality Coalition also suggests that, for the purposes of human rights law, sectarian identity should be regarded as an ethnicity and sectarianism, therefore, as a form of racism.[32]

56. The Equality Commission suggested that the intention signalled in T:BUC to provide a definition of sectarianism needs to be considered in relation to the conduct or legally defined actions to which the definition would apply. The importance of significant consultation on this matter was stressed by a number of respondents including NIACRO, who specifically highlighted the need to engage with young people in defining what good relations is, and how the concept can be embraced by them.[33]

57. The NIHRC and others recommended that the duty to promote good relations be extended beyond the current remit of religious belief, political opinion or racial group, to include the categories detailed in the equality obligations.

58. Forthspring InterCommunity Group suggested a two-pronged approach - a legislative framework that includes clear definitions of sectarianism and good relations alongside a broad vision of a peaceful and reconciled society within which people can agree to disagree on constitutional and contentious issues based on respect for each other.[34] This was reiterated in oral evidence to the Committee when they stated "*We need a legal definition of good relations for a start so that it can be promoted in a way that supports and underpins equality… which gives us a sense of the society that we want.*"[35] This was echoed by Professor Shirlow from Queen's University during oral evidence to the Committee when he said "*I am not sure that we really have proper working definitions of what we are trying to change.*"[36]

59. Concern about definitions and their use was also raised during the stakeholder event hosted by the Committee in January 2015. Opinions expressed during the discussions included a view that other terms used in the context of T:BUC such as "shared housing" and "shared neighbourhoods", or indeed "shared space," required more clarity, particularly where there is a concern that these terms suggest people may be forced together against their will.

60. **The Committee notes the support from the written evidence received and through the stakeholder event for the introduction of definitions for 'sectarianism' and 'good relations.' The Committee recognises that agreed definitions are useful for the purposes of the monitoring and evaluation of T:BUC programmes, and that the proper place for defining these terms is in the context of legislation. The Committee therefore supports the intention of Ministers, stated within Together: Building a United Community, to *"seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism, based on this Strategy"*.**[37]

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31 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Community Relations Council; NI Human Rights Commission; Youth Council NI; Holywell Trust, Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction; Co-operation Ireland

32 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Equality Coalition

33 Appendix 3: Written submissions - NIACRO

34 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Forthspring InterCommunity Group

35 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - InterAction Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum & Forthspring InterCommunity Group

36 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow and Professor Brandon Hamber

37 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.19 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

Resourcing T:BUC

Financing Together: Building a United Community

61. In his statement to the Assembly on T:BUC the First Minister noted that "*since devolution, approximately £500m has been spent on supporting good relations work across Northern Ireland*."[38]

62. Whilst the Committee terms of reference did not explicitly refer to the budget allocation for T:BUC or funding for good relations initiatives, a consistent theme emerging from oral and written evidence across all sectors, and also raised in briefings with OFMDFM officials, was concern about the resourcing of T:BUC and funding available for local community and voluntary sector organisations. To gain a better understanding the Committee commissioned Assembly Research to prepare a paper on the funding framework for Good Relations activity in Northern Ireland. This is available at **Appendix 5**.

63. Members of the Committee explored the issues of a budget for T:BUC with witnesses in oral evidence to the Inquiry. For example when the Chair questioned representatives from the Community Relations Council by asking *"If I were to ask you what you think the budget is for T:BUC, what would you say?"* The response was *"Probably not enough"*, followed by "*I don't know."*[39]

64. That said, all those contributing to the Inquiry were fully cognisant of the challenging economic situation which the NI Executive currently faces. As was noted by the Chief Executive of CRC,

> *"Your review is also to be welcomed. It is a very timely moment to draw breath because in the conditions in which the policy moved forward, more resources were available at that time…This is not where we are now."*[40]

65. The Assembly Research Paper detailed the funding provided through OFMDFM resourced programmes over the course of this mandate.[41]

38 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/official-report/reports-12-13/14-may-2013/#2 [Accessed 12 June 2015]

39 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project and Groundwork NI

40 Ibid

41 Appendix 5: Assembly Research Papers - Community Releations Funding in Northern Ireland

Table 4: Community Relations Programmes Administered by OFMDFM 2011 - 2015[42]

Programme	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
District Councils Good Relations[43]	£3,150,000.00	£3,300,000.00	£3,400,000.00	£2,800,000.00
North Belfast Strategic Good Relations	£750,785.00	£770,000.00	£770,000.00	£670,000.00
Contested Spaces Programme[44]	£617,770.00	£1,109,791.00	£1,509,567.00	£710,000.00
Central and Other Good Relations	£234,768.00	£472,000.00	£1,100,000.00	£1,321,000.00
Summer Intervention Programme[45]	£400,000.00	£536,000.00	£500,000.00	£700,000.00
Total Direct Funding	£5,153,323.00	£6,187,791.00	£7,279,567.00	£6,201,000.00
CRC Allocation	£3,588,000.00	£4,360,000.00	£3,510,000.00	£3,476,000.00
Total OFMdFM Funding	£8,741,323.00	£10,547,791.00	£10,789,567.00	£9,677,000.00

66. Through questioning of Departmental officials, and also through written correspondence, the Committee has attempted to ascertain the breakdown of proposed budget allocations in relation to the T:BUC headline actions, over the lifetime of the strategy. In April 2015 the Department advised Members through correspondence of the budget profile for progressing the headline actions for 2015/16 and indicated that, as the full costs of all actions are not yet known, it was not possible to provide a full budget profile beyond this. The figures provided at that time for revenue expenditure throughout 2015/16 were:

- United Youth Programme £3m
- 100 Summer Schools/Camps £1.2m
- 10 Shared Educational Campuses £0.2m
- 10 Shared Neighbourhoods £0.29m
- Cross Community Sporting Programme £0.545m
- Urban Villages Programme £2.46m
- Removal of Interface Barriers £0.77m[46]

67. The Committee noted that expenditure in relation to the headline actions is held centrally and distributed to the relevant departments on request through bids in the regular monitoring rounds.

68. The Department also provided figures in June 2015 regarding the funding provided by OFMDFM for good relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15, including identification of additional spend allocated in year 2014/15 following successful bids for delivery of priorities

42 Information provided by OFMdFM 2 October 2014.

43 This figure is matched by district councils at 25%, therefore the figures shown here are 75% of the total programme

44 This includes 50% match funding from Atlantic Philanthropies.

45 The Summer Intervention Programme includes annual technical transfer to the Department of Education.

46 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 23 April 2015

of T:BUC.[47] These figures do not include expenditure by the Community Relations Council in 2014/15 (£3.256m) or by other Departments in respect of the T:BUC headline actions for which they have lead responsibility.

Table 5: OFMDFM expenditure on good relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15

Programme	2013/14 (£)	2014/15 Opening Position (£)	2014/15 Final Position (£)	Additional expenditure 2014/15 (£)
District Councils Good Relations Programme	3,400,000	2,590,000	3,268,975	678,975
North Belfast Strategic Good Relations	770,000	670,000	750,000	80,000
Contested Spaces Programme	1,505,207	535,000	747,899	212,899
Central and Other Good Relations	1,100,000	576,000	1,756,247	1,180,247
Summer Intervention Programme	500,000	400,000	500,000	100,000
Summer Camps/Schools	nil	nil	200,000	200,000
Urban Villages	nil	nil	350,000	350,000
North Belfast City Learning Centre	92,000	92,000	92,000	Nil
Total Direct Funding	**7,275,207**	**4,863,000**	**7,665,121**	**2,802,121**

69. **The Committee recognises the constrained financial situation within which all Departments are seeking to deliver on programmes and priorities and encourages the Executive not to lose sight of priorities to support building a united and shared community amongst other budgetary pressures. In addition the Committee supports the development of a budget profile for each headline action across the lifetime of the strategy, with associated milestones to add transparency to the T:BUC expenditure.**

Provision of Funding

70. Primary amongst the concerns raised by stakeholders was the impact of uncertainty around funding on the sustainability of provision. This was articulated by the Chairperson of CRC who in oral evidence stated

> *"We also believe that is important to recognise the need to build, rather than erode, the infrastructure that is delivering some of its work on the ground."*[48]

71. It was also put to the Committee that existing best practice is being challenged because of uncertainty regarding funding, including delays in hearing the outcome of funding applications, and very short funding cycles. Sylvia Gordon from Groundwork NI advised Members that "*if we are committed to peace-building, which we are…we have to put the strategic vision forward, rather than being busy, busy, busy looking for the next small pot of funding*."[49]

72. A concern expressed during the stakeholder event was that, due to uncertainty over funding, those with expertise in cross-community work are moving to other sectors, echoing concerns heard from Council representatives (discussed elsewhere in this report). Attendees also advised that organisations with years of collective experience are facing closure. Another matter raised with Members was that if an organisation working at an interface was in receipt

47 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 11 June 2015

48 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project and Groundwork NI

49 Ibid

of funding and the situation in that area subsequently improved, funding can sometimes be cut or removed, undermining the work carried out to date and potentially impacting on the long-term sustainability of good relations in an area. Attendees at the stakeholder event noted a more efficient and effective way of using resources is to "nip things in the bud", rather than dealing with the aftermath of a negative event. Similarly during oral evidence with representatives working in rural communities Members were told that "*we have paid a terrible price for being peaceful*."[50] Those working in rural areas also suggested that there was a perception that funding rural programmes was seen to be more 'expensive' compared to urban projects.

73. The Committee recognises that making applications to funding programmes is a resource and time intensive process for individuals, and can distract from the task of delivering programmes on the ground. With regard to the Central Good Relations Fund those attending the stakeholder event expressed unease regarding the length of time it took for decisions to be made. Attendees felt that it was better to know the outcome, either positive or negative, sooner rather than later to allow for proper planning. These frustrations were echoed by a number of witnesses through oral evidence including Maureen Hetherington from The Junction in Derry/Londonderry who told the Committee that "*we put in an application and three months later we have still not had word on whether or not we were successful."*[51] Johnston Price from Forthspring InterCommunity Group told Members that:

> *"There has been a series of delays, an absence of transparency and there is no appeal process. There is a widely held belief that it is, at best, a political carve-up and, at worst, a sectarian carve-up. In the absence of transparency, people will talk."*[52]

74. At central government level the Committee was urged to consider the need for appropriate policy levers to ensure that money across all headline actions is spent effectively. During the stakeholder event Members heard about a peace wall that was to be opened up in consultation with the local community, but which required traffic calming measures. It was reported that the process of engaging other departments and acquiring the resources necessary to do this was not straightforward, and yet only a relatively small amount of funding was required.

75. Those providing evidence to the Committee acknowledged that there could be duplication of provision within the sector, and that there needs to be more collaboration between groups. However some felt that a competitive funding environment was a barrier to collaboration and sharing good practice. The need for proper and effective evaluation was also highlighted as it was noted that the same amount of funding might be awarded to two separate projects, with very different outcomes. Effective evaluation should consider what other factors are at play in these situations.

76. Responding to some of these concerns the Department informed the Committee that T:BUC commits to the establishment of a Funders' Advisory Group that would sit alongside the Ministerial Panel within the delivery and implementation architecture of the strategy. The Funders' Advisory Group would work with the Ministerial Panel to ensure the strategic allocation of good relations funding in line with strategic objectives; and contribute to discussions on good relations funding, and any future funding delivery model.

77. Departmental officials also advised that T:BUC gave a commitment to commission a comprehensive review of the structure, delivery and impact of existing funding delivery mechanisms; and that the T:BUC strategy acknowledges that adequately resourcing good relations activity is critical to the effective implementation of its objectives. T:BUC also recognises the need to ensure that funding is directed in a way that secures sustainability

50 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Rural Community Network

51 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction & Holywell Trust

52 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - InterAction Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum & Forthspring InterCommunity Group

of the infrastructure that has been established at local level and that continues to develop capacity of individuals and organisations working to build good relations across our society.

78. **The Committee notes that T:BUC recognises that work is required to ensure the allocation of good relations funding is in line with strategic objectives and also with any future funding model. However the Committee is also aware that delays in terms of receipt of funding, alongside short-term funding cycles, can create uncertainty. The Committee recommends that the Funders' Advisory Group, which will be established to sit alongside the Ministerial Panel, is brought forward as soon as possible to progress work on the review of good relations funding and the development of a good relations funding model. In developing this model the Committee recommends that OFMDFM takes account of the burden faced by individuals and organisations through short-term funding cycles and considers ways to alleviate these pressures. The Committee also recommends that the Department works to promote transparency in allocation of funding at departmental level, and also through local councils and arm's-length bodies.**

79. The Committee has also noted from stakeholders concerns that T:BUC is over-reliant on pilot programmes which either do not have the opportunity to develop into something more sustainable, or which are developed to fit a particular funding stream. Ms Irwin, Chief Executive of CRC noted, "*We've probably reached the end of experimental peacebuilding*."[53] Members heard that while some of the T:BUC initiatives have a pilot phase, the experience of, and learning from, organisations involved in similar activities has not been taken into consideration. Professor Knox told the Committee,

> *"One of the things that surprised us a little about the lead-in to T:BUC was the focus on running pilots...one of the questions that we have asked is why it needs to do pilots if a programme is already being funded that has essentially done some of that work to test out some of those ideas."*[54]

80. **The Committee recognises the wisdom, both in terms of public expenditure and strategic planning, of piloting initiatives under the headline actions of T:BUC. However the Committee considers that it is important, not least in terms of the potential for increased confidence in the T:BUC strategy, that programmes and initiatives are moved from the pilot phase to solid state as soon as is practically possible, with those projects that are successful up-scaled appropriately.**

Role of Local Government

81. The Committee recognises that Local Government has had an important policy implementation and delivery role in relation to building a united and shared community through the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP). This contribution is also acknowledged through T:BUC which makes specific commitments relating to the District Council Good Relations Programme. Furthermore, the Committee realises that the re-organisation of local government across Northern Ireland presents new opportunities for communities to be involved in policy and decision making at a local level through community planning. The Committee was therefore pleased to receive written submissions from six of the former District Councils and it was no surprise that the main areas raised were in relation to the DCGRP and community planning.[55] The Committee invited the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) to present oral evidence on behalf of local government representatives.

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53 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project and Groundwork NI

54 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams

55 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Ballymena Borough Council; Banbridge District Council; Belfast City Council; Derry City Council; Newtownabbey Borough Council; Strabane District Council

82. Each of the Councils that responded to the Committee's call for evidence provided details of a wide variety of programmes and initiatives designed to tackle local manifestations of sectarianism and promote a united community within each of their contexts, including through sports and arts; intergenerational work; capacity building and mentoring; work relating to bands and bonfires; and engagement with minority ethnic communities and LGBT groups.

83. Recognising the significant work undertaken at local government level, the Committee commissioned Assembly Research to provide information on the grants provided by councils to local voluntary and community groups for the purposes of good relations activity. This research paper, which is available at **Appendix 5**, illustrates the breadth of organisations that undertake activities to build a united community, and also reinforces the view that there is no 'one size fits all' approach in relation to this work.

District Council Good Relations Programme

84. In August 2012 the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) prepared a draft Evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme, and a copy was sent to the Committee by OFMDFM in April 2014. The Evaluation Report includes some useful background information on the DCGRP which began as the District Council Community Relations Programme (DCCRP), developed by central Government in 1989. At that time the aims of the programme were to develop cross-community contact and co-operation; promote greater mutual understanding; and increase respect for cultural traditions. The Programme has extended in scope in recent years and has changed its name to reflect the focus on *good relations* across society rather than what can be interpreted as the somewhat narrower term of *community relations.*[56] The DCGRP does not exist as a single or overarching Programme - rather it is a series of individually developed and administered programmes across each of the local authorities in Northern Ireland. The main activities delivered through the DCGRP can be summarised as *"engaging with communities and encouraging communications across divided communities as well as delivering training and supporting cultural events and local community groups."*[57]

85. In the years 2008/09 to 2010/11 funding for the DCGRP increased by 28% (from £2.5million to £3.2million respectively). Funding is provided on a match basis with the majority (75%) coming from central Government through OFMDFM, and the remainder (25%) coming from Local Government budgets.[58] In correspondence in April 2014 OFMDFM advised that the evaluation was completed in August 2012 and that all 29 recommendations had been accepted by the Department. The Department also indicated that the future direction of the DCGRP was being considered as part of the Review of Good Relations Funding being undertaken by the Strategic Investment Board (SIB). In further correspondence with the Committee the Department advised in March 2015 that it had

> *"accepted the recommendations of the NISRA evaluation and the majority of these have been implemented, primarily as the result of the DCGRP being fully aligned with the Together: Building a United Community Strategy… The…Strategy has provided a strong overarching structure for the DCGRP which the Department regards as an important means of delivering the objectives of the strategy at a local level."*[59]

86. Paragraphs 6.32 - 6.38 of "Together: Building a United Community" deal specifically with the DCGRP and include the following commitments:

- "The findings and recommendations from this [NISRA] evaluation will help inform an enhanced District Council Programme that reflects the strategic priorities of the strategy.

56 Draft Report of the Evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme, NISRA, April 2012 p.iii

57 Ibid p.iii-iv

58 Ibid p.56

59 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 19 March 2015

- We will ensure that good relations considerations are mainstreamed into the revised arrangements under the Review of Public Administration."[60]

87. T:BUC also suggests the development of Good Relations Action Plans and indicates that the revised DCGRP would be structured as follows:

- "The Ministerial Panel will issue centralised guidance on completing Action Plans and will require District Councils to complete action plans that meet the strategic priorities of this Strategy but that allow a degree of flexibility to respond to localised issues;
- robustness of Action Plans will be assessed in terms of meeting the headline actions and commitments of this Strategy; and
- progress against Action Plans will be monitored against the revised Good Relations indicators."[61]

88. **The Committee acknowledges the valuable contribution that local government has made, and continues to make, to building a united and shared community across Northern Ireland. Members also welcome the inclusion of the District Council Good Relations Programme within the Together: Building a United Community strategy, and recognise the flexibility the programme affords to local councils to work out what building good relations means in the context of their own areas.**

89. In oral evidence to the Committee, officials from Derry City Council indicated that they were delighted to see the DCGRP highlighted and included as a vehicle for building a united community. They also highlighted the good support received from the OFMDFM officials in charge of delivering the programme.

90. However, the council representatives also wished to advise the Committee of areas for potential improvement. Members were apprised of specific issues relating to the letters of offer received by councils (75% from OFMDFM with 25% match funding from the council) for the DCGRP, and were advised that letters of offer usually arrive half way through the financial year meaning that councils operate their good relations programmes at risk, particularly through the challenging summer period. Difficulties caused by this delay include the inability to plan strategically, with some Good Relations Officers being put on notice on an annual basis whilst waiting for notification of the grant award from OFMDFM. The challenge was summed up like this:

> *"If we cannot work strategically on things like interfaces, flags, parades and marching, which are the types of issues that come up generally, before we receive a letter of offer… it is very difficult for us to function effectively or as effectively as we could… In the past some local authorities were willing to work at risk to mitigate this and still get the work done. Given the funding climate we are all experiencing, that is going to be impacted on now, especially over the summer months, where a lot of our work is so necessary in dealing with key issues."*[62]

91. These issues were also reflected in the written submission from Derry City Council which highlighted concern that there was a lack of transparency regarding the allocation of funding to the DCGRP, and whether or not this was a competitive process.[63]

60 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.107-109 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

61 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.108-109 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

62 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Good Relations Programmes: NILGA

63 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Derry City Council

92. During oral evidence, the Committee heard that another consequence of uncertainty over funding was high staff turnover. The Council representatives advised,

> *"You then have a reasonably high turnover of staff; you have a drain on the expertise of good relations staff working for local councils. It is a vicious circle; it is not improving if people cannot stay in post, stay committed and build their skills."*[64]

93. Another challenge presented by high staff turnover is that relationships with the local community and voluntary sector, statutory agencies and relevant government departments, must be rebuilt each time, an activity which is both resource and time intensive.

94. Correspondence received by the Committee from OFMDFM in March 2015 acknowledged that more needs to be done to ensure letters of offer that issue to councils are not subject to undue delay. There was a commitment to endeavour to ensure that letters of offer in 2015/16 are issued as quickly as possible. The Committee was therefore pleased to hear from OFMDFM officials during a subsequent oral briefing on 13 May 2015 that letters of offer in relation to the DCGRP were issued to six Councils in April, with the remaining five expected to be complete by the end of May.[65]

95. The Assembly Research paper on grants provided by local government for good relations highlighted that Councils choose to use their DCGRP funding in different ways. For example some councils deliver a programme of small grants to community and voluntary sector groups working in the local community, whilst others like Dungannon and South Tyrone use the funding solely to deliver programmes. The Committee heard that there can be pressure on local council small grants programme to pick up the slack when gaps in funding from other sources emerge, for example between peace programmes, or when an international funding body revises its priorities with knock on effects.

> *"District councils tend to get the flak when other good relations funding cycles close and start. For example, when one round of Peace funding closes and there is a six- or nine-month gap until the next one, everybody looks at the council to fulfil that".*[66]

96. Correspondence from the Department in October 2014 indicated that officials are working with the SIB to finalise the report on the delivery of all good relations funding, including that provided through the DCGRP; and that following Ministers' consideration of the report, further engagement with stakeholders will take place at which stage a copy of the final report will be forwarded to the Committee.[67]

97. Despite the breadth of experience in promoting a united and shared community at local government level the Committee heard that opportunities to share good practice between council districts were becoming increasingly limited. A previous two-day annual conference for Good Relations practitioners across Northern Ireland has been condensed to a half-day programme. However, Members also heard that Councils are required to submit an annual report to OFMDFM as part of the monitoring of grant aide. Whilst it does not always follow that what works well in one area can be readily replicated in another, it was suggested that good practice from these reports could be circulated to help inform and improve approaches to building a united community.

98. **The Committee recommends that OFMDFM continues to support the District Council Good Relations Programme, and specifically through the ongoing implementation of the NISRA Evaluation Report recommendations; ensuring that letters of offer with regard to the DCGRP are issued at the start of a new financial year; and continuing to provide high quality support from OFMDFM officials.**

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64 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Good Relations Programmes: NILGA

65 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Departmental officials - 13 May 2015

66 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence

67 Appendix 4: OFMDFM papers and correspondence - 21 October 2014

99. **The Committee also recognises the potential of the District Council Good Relations Programme to make small scale interventions in local communities, which can have a major impact. The Committee recommends that OFMDFM reviews the District Council small grants scheme to ensure consistency of provision across local government, and to ensure that these funds are maximised to deliver positive good relations outcomes.**

100. **Whist recognising that one size does not fit all, the Committee recommends that opportunities to share best practice between local government areas should be enhanced, through opportunities for increased face to face interactions between Good Relations Officers and harnessing new technologies, for example through an online resource bank. The Committee also recommends that the annual reports prepared by each District Council as part of their monitoring and evaluation obligations with OFMDFM are circulated widely amongst those involved in the DCGRP to further the development of that programme.**

Community Planning & the involvement of communities in decision making

101. The Inquiry terms of reference called for views "examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers." The importance of engaging with local communities was acknowledged in responses from government departments. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) noted its experience that involvement by communities themselves in policy development is critical where integration and good relations are concerned.[68] The unique nature of local community involvement in arts and sports organisations was noted by those attending the stakeholder event. Similarly the Department for Regional Development (DRD) advised that in regard to flags and emblems, effective resolution is more likely to be achieved through co-operation with local communities.[69] This was also a theme explored during the Committee's stakeholder event in January 2015. Those attending told Members that communities have to be at the front and centre of local decision making. They suggested that answers to localised issues often sit within communities, who can often propose the most cost effective and easy way to implement a solution.

102. During their oral evidence Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams provided the Committee with an example of how local communities have been empowered to make decisions about their own areas. They spoke of a group of parents of school pupils involved in a project with Community Relations in Schools where, due to the presence of a physical interface barrier, children from one participating school had to get a bus to travel to the other participating school. However following consultation with parents a local supermarket was approached to open a gate to facilitate access on foot. This reduced the cost of the initiative and demonstrated that a simple, cost-effective action can have a big impact.[70] However, those working on the ground like Ballymoney Community Resource Centre and Participation and Practice of Rights, cautioned against attempts to engage communities in decision making which has a pre-determined point; and expressed concern that local communities can be cast in support roles to statutory agencies rather than included as key players.[71]

103. Community planning is described in a Department of the Environment guidance document as:

> *"a process led by councils in conjunction with partners and communities to develop and implement a shared vision for their area, a long term vision which relates to all aspects of community life and which also involves working together to plan and deliver better services which make a real difference to people's lives."*[72]

68 Appendix 2: Written submission - Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

69 Appendix 2: Written submission - Department for Regional Development

70 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Colin Knox & Ms Sarah McWilliams

71 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Ballymoney Community Resource Centre; Participation and Practice of Rights

72 *Local Government Reform, Guidance to Councils: Community Planning Foundation Programme, DOENI, October 2013 http://www.doeni.gov.uk/community_planning_foundation_programme_-_oct_2013.pdf*

104. The new community planning powers delegated to councils under Local Government Reform were cited in many of the written submissions as a way in which local communities could engage in policy and decision making. Unsurprisingly this view was supported in the submissions from local councils. Ballymena Borough Council suggested that "*community planning will be an excellent vehicle for each new council to use for the delivery of a comprehensive, cohesive, local solution to the issue of interfaces.*"[73] This was echoed by Newtownabbey Borough Council which stated that,

> *"each new Council area is diverse with different good relations issues which are specific to their communities; therefore, community planning should ensure that all voices are considered when planning and agreeing local interventions and solutions."* [74]

105. The potential for community planning within the new councils to provide opportunities to be involved in policy and decision making at local level was shared by a number of groups and organisations. Whilst not a panacea those at the stakeholder event acknowledged that the process of community planning could help to build relationships and promote engagement, facilitating communities to come together to discuss areas of mutual interest. However, they also noted that communities are not homogenous and that some communities are difficult to reach; for example, those that are socially excluded, minority ethnic communities and young people. There was a perception by some that policies are already written before community input is considered and that submissions to consultations are ignored. It was also noted that policy documents can often be too detailed and complex for the public to understand, and that many citizens are not aware of the work of politicians in developing policy and legislation. Suggestions from stakeholders included using social media more to find out what people think and to get feedback, holding focus groups, encouraging youth councils, and finding more ways to engage women in decision making. In responding to the Committee's call for written evidence Glencree Women's Project observed that a real fear persists within and between communities which makes it difficult for women to raise their head above the parapet and speak out.[75]

106. Indeed, the Committee recognises the important contribution that women have made to promoting good relations and towards building a united and shared community. The Committee was pleased to receive a number of submissions from organisations representing the women's sector, including in-depth reports from the Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA).[76] Members were also pleased to host representatives from these groups at the stakeholder event and hear their specific views on these matters. **The Committee notes the perception that the role women have played in building peace has not always been acknowledged by policy makers, and the view that this is also true of the Together: Building a United Community strategy document. Discussion on building shared and safe communities should acknowledge and promote the participation of women in politics and wider peacebuilding**; not least in recognition that women experience conflict differently and therefore have very different post-conflict needs.

107. In acknowledging that some groups are hard to reach for policy and decision makers, the Committee recognises that the opposite can also be true with elected representatives, government departments and statutory agencies being hard to reach for some groups. An informal meeting held in conjunction with the Bytes project during the course of the Inquiry allowed Members the opportunity to hear directly from 'at risk' young people on their views about good relations and building a united and shared community. A report of this event can be found at **Appendix 6**. Suggestions for more proactive engagement with young people included better use of social media and online platforms; offering young people the

73 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Ballymoney Borough Council

74 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Newtownabbey Borough Council

75 Appendix 3: Written Submissions - Glencree Women's Project

76 Appendix 3: Written Submission - Women's Resource and Development Agency

opportunity to meet with elected representatives once or twice a year; and better engagement with groups and organisations working with young people.

108. **With regard to wider policy development and decision making the Committee recognises that, for some groups, access to elected representatives, government departments and statutory agencies can be difficult. The Committee recommends therefore that OFMDFM brings forward policy development guidance for Departments which ensures that policy and decision makers develop and maintain a clear focus on identifying hard to reach groups; and that they assess and meet their capacity needs recognising that this may, at times, require external facilitation.**

109. In oral evidence to the Committee NILGA noted that one of the strengths of community planning is the ability to bring key players together to work on themes or specific areas. However, the witnesses sounded a note of caution as they felt it was unclear how government departments are tied into the process and indicated that, to work effectively, community planning has to move outside traditional departmental silos.[77]

110. Ballymoney Community Resource Centre suggested that the T:BUC strategy should become part of the foundation for each new council's community planning process. Meanwhile in its written submission NI Environment Link (NIEL) emphasised the important potential of community planning in local government reform. The new two-tier planning system structures will allow communities to become more involved in the development of the vision for their council area, and the implementation of that vision.

111. The T:BUC strategy acknowledges that "*building a truly united community can only be possible when people feel safe and secure in all neighbourhoods and spaces within our community*."[78] In so doing the strategy notes the need for an interagency approach to community safety, particularly through the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs). In a written submission to the Committee the PSNI welcomed that the role of PCSPs and District PCSPs in delivering safer, shared and confident communities at local level had been highlighted in T:BUC. The PSNI went on to suggest that T:BUC will need to inform the work of the new District Councils under community planning provisions to address underlying community issues on a partnership bases to deliver locally the strategic outcomes.[79]

112. In written evidence the NI Strategic Migration Partnership noted that community planning provides "*a key opportunity through which the creation of more diverse and inclusive neighbourhoods might take place with the support of those individuals living and working locally.*"[80]

113. The Committee chose to explore these ideas through oral evidence with representatives from NILGA. Members heard that:

> *"the ability of local government to work locally is incredibly important... Although we need the strategy to be set at a central level, it also needs to be fed by what happens at ground level. So, that reciprocal relationship is incredibly important and can be worked out through the community planning process…"*[81]

114. **The Committee acknowledges that local communities have an important part to play in decision making relating to their own areas and notes that community planning has the potential to allow communities to influence decision making in their areas. The Committee**

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77 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Planning: Northern Ireland Local Government Association, Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

78 http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.77 [Accessed 11 June 2015]

79 Appendix 3: Written submissions - PSNI

80 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

81 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Planning: Northern Ireland Local Government Association, Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

recognises that responsibility for community planning rests with local councils and the Department of the Environment and recommends that the First Minister and deputy First Minister work with the Minister of the Environment to ensure that community planning as a departmental priority is focused on the aims and objectives of T:BUC, which could include the inclusion of a specific commitment in the next Programme for Government. The Committee also strongly encourages the Committee for the Environment to monitor the implementation and development of community planning as a vehicle for communities to be involved in decision making, with good relations at its core.

Approaches to addressing sectarianism and division

115. As part of its terms of reference the Committee asked for views on how sectarianism and division can be addressed. In responding, stakeholders provided Members with a wealth of information about how sectarianism and division is being addressed through a wide variety of programmes and initiatives across cities, towns and villages throughout Northern Ireland. The practitioners who presented Members with further evidence during formal Committee meetings, along with those attending stakeholder events, represent only a fraction of the personnel involved in building relationships across communities up and down the country. The detailed written submissions available at **Appendix 3** provide more information in this regard.

116. The variety of information received confirmed to Members that there is no uniform approach to addressing sectarianism and division and that factors relating to location, demography, capacity and confidence must all be taken into account in seeking to deal with these issues. Whilst it is not possible to reflect each of the programmes that Members considered during the course of the Inquiry the next section discusses some of the broad themes emerging from their deliberations on the evidence.

Exploring shared issues: Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme

117. During one evidence session Members heard from Professor Knox and Ms McWilliams who have undertaken an evaluation of the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme, which began in 2011 and is jointly funded by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies.[82] The witnesses advised Members that the key aim of the programme was:

> *"to promote and improve relations between and across disadvantaged contested space/interface communities. The programme provides these communities with opportunities to shape and influence how children and youth services are provided in a way that encourages reconciliation, increases participation of communities in policy making,and contributes to better outcomes for children, young people and families."*

118. The evidence presented by Prof Knox and Ms McWilliams suggested to Members that there is benefit in bringing communities together to discuss common issues like parenting or education and skills outcomes, rather than focusing primarily on issues of sectarianism or difference. Members heard that, in spite of external pressures including times of civil unrest, those participating in these initiatives were still keen to continue because they realised the overall benefit of the programme to their families and community. Whilst the focus of programmes may not have been on issues relating to community relations, over time, as trust and relationships improved, these difficult areas became part of conversation. The witnesses advised that,

> *"We have found that uniting people and communities on common shared issues rather than through a direct, head-on good-relations approach, has been very effective in building relationships between communities. By shared issues, we mean things such as education, parenting, childcare, bullying, drugs and alcohol".*

82 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams

119. The range of programmes and activities delivered through Contested Spaces/Interfaces is highlighted in the table below.[83]

Table 6: Programmes funded through Contested Spaces/Interfaces

Project	Area	Aim
Achieving Personal Potential	Shankill/Carrickhill, Ballysillan/ Ligoniel, Skegoniell/Glandore, Whitewell/Whitecity	To provide opportunities for young people to build relationships through: team building, drama, music, personal development, arts and crafts, and educational homework and revision workshops
Active Respectful Communities	Six schools in Ardoyne and Shankill	Early years and parenting, community relations education linked into the curriculum, focused residential programmes for families
Aspire	Inner North Belfast	Shared service programme focused on increased parental engagement & skills to support children's learning; improving educational outcomes for children engaged in the programme; raises expectations of children and parents
Faces and Spaces	Falls Road/Shankill Road; Castledergy/Newtownstewart; Waterside/Cityside; Ballymena; Short Strand/East Belfast	Early Years approach to good relations operating through community-led partnerships, based around the Media Initiative for Children, Respecting Difference Programme
Foyle Contested Space	Derry/Londonderry - three post primary & five primary schools	Shared education including shared delivery of curriculum activities, provision of shared teacher training, and issues of common concern in sexual health, internet/mobile phone safety and alcohol awareness
Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Societies	Craigavon	Collaborative partner engagement, and a range of cross-community and cross-cultural activities based around sport, art and media
South Armagh Childcare Consortium	South Armagh	Focus on young families and children. Cross community after schools project, Media Initiative for Children, Respecting Difference Programme, Incredible Years parenting programme and summer scheme
Spaces to Be: Playboard NI	Four primary schools in East Belfast	Focused diversity in play project
Waterside Partnership - Parents and Communities Together (PACT)	Derry/Londonderry	PACT provides support to very young children and their parents. Its main elements are an eight week group programme and individual support to parents/families at home.

120. In presenting the emerging findings from his Northern Ireland Project research to the Committee, Professor Shirlow indicated that the family plays an important role in developing emotional security and building cohesiveness. He posed the question "*should we not be doing more at the site of the family… relationship with the family seems to be very important in how people behave and their attitudes and how they cope in their societies*?"[84]

83 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams

84 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

121. **The Committee recognises the merit in bringing groups together around issues of common concern like parenting, supporting children through education, or a shared anxiety around drug and alcohol misuse; and commends the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme as an innovative approach to building good relations between communities. The Committee recommends that the Department gives full consideration to the evaluation of the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme and applies the learning to the development of future programmes and initiatives, including prioritising areas for funding.**

Single Identity Approach

122. During oral evidence Members explored the place of single identity approaches[85] within a broader good relations framework and were interested to observe that there was no consensus amongst witnesses in this regard. This was clearly evident during the briefing from representatives of the RCN in Ballymoney in March 2015. When asked whether single identity work needs to be emphasised to build up resilience and capacity before moving to cross-community work, witnesses indicated that in a private discussion prior to giving evidence there had been no agreement amongst themselves on the issue. There was general recognition that single identity work is often a necessary pre-cursor to a broader cross community agenda as reflected by the Peace Walls Programme, who in written evidence advised that the starting point of any good relations work should always be single identity training and instilling respect for your own community.[86] However one witness found that "*rather than building confidence to come out and espouse other groups, it [single identity work] is entrenching ideas and ideals*."[87] This echoed the view of Professor Shirlow who noted that the findings from the Northern Ireland Project were indicating that "*identity buffers you and makes you feel part of the community, but it also makes you outplay your actions against the other community*."[88]

123. In discussing the findings from the Contested Spaces/Interfaces Programme Professor Knox advised the Committee that it was his view that "*we have reached the political circumstances where single identity work should be very much a minor lead in to stuff that is cross community*."[89] The Glencree Women's Group, in written evidence, felt that high levels of segregation leave little room for more mixed relationships among children and grandchildren, thereby perpetuating segregation for another generation.

124. **The Committee acknowledges that there are different views about the role of single identity work in building a united and shared community. The Committee recognises the importance of respecting the pace at which people are willing to travel in relation to building a united community, and that this will differ depending on local circumstances. The Committee therefore recommends that single identity groups are provided with the tools to build confidence and capacity; and, at the same time, are helped to understand the value of moving beyond a single identity approach, and provided with opportunities for this to happen.**

Shared Space

125. During the stakeholder event with young people from the Bytes project Members heard a number of comments about the perceived lack of shared space in Belfast, and the consequent lack of opportunities to meet people from other communities.[90] This was a

85 "Single identity work refers to those projects, programmes and initiatives that engage their participant members solely from one side of the divide in Northern Ireland. Though not always the case, single identity work often involves exploring and affirming issues related to cultural identity". (Single Identity Work: An approach to conflict resolution in Northern Ireland, Church, C., Visser, A. and Johnson, L. (2002, August), INCORE Working Paper.)

86 Appendix 3: Written Submissions - Peace Walls Programme

87 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Rural Community Network

88 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

89 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Colin Knox & Ms Sarah McWilliams

90 Appendix 6: Other Papers and Correspondence - Bytes Project event

theme that the Committee had an opportunity to explore further with representatives from the Landscape Institute NI (LINI) and NIEL, who through oral and written evidence informed Members on matters relating to the development and maintenance of shared space.[91] They advised that "*research demonstrates that the environment is a key factor in building community cohesion*"; and that "*green shared space is recognised as a key factor in developing a sense of community - it provides us with venues for neighbourliness and social cohesion.*"

126. NIEL signposted the Committee to the NI Environment Agency Challenge Fund as an important vehicle for building a sense of community and civic pride. They highlighted the 'Suffolk Interface Pocket Plots' initiative - a proposal to develop cross-community plots on the interface zone between the Suffolk estate and the Suffolk Crescent/Ladybrook area - as a good example of this. Having had their interested piqued by this project Members invited representatives from Suffolk Community Forum to brief the Committee during their visit to West Belfast.[92] They were advised that this project has been a long time in coming to fruition and that since 2009 NIHE has been providing support to help Suffolk Community Forum transform the land for shared use. The pocket plots initiative is part of a wider plan for development, and Members were informed that, after almost a year of negotiations with all stakeholders, an agreement has been reached for pedestrian access for plot holders from both sides of the interface.

127. In oral evidence to the Committee Mr Pete Mullin from LINI told Members that a key message from a conference held earlier in the year was that "*building relationships matter in urban planning.*" He was keen to point out that this wasn't simply a focus on the relationship between local communities, but also the relationship around funding, procurement and departmental silos.

128. Both Mr Mullin and Dr McCabe directed Members to a DOE publication "Living Places - an Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland."[93] It aims to

> *"assist in the planning process by clearly establishing key principles behind good place-making in order to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland."*[94]

129. The Committee subsequently wrote to the DOE to seek information on how 'Living Places' connects with Together: Building a United Community. In responding DOE advised that it considers 'Living Places' to connect with the intentions of T:BUC in a number of ways including its focus on "*creating places that are high quality, distinctive, safe, welcoming and healthy, where communities flourish and enjoy a shared sense of belonging*."[95] DOE also recognises the important role that the planning system plays in addressing the issues highlighted by T:BUC through its influence on the type, location, siting and design of development. The Department goes on to indicate that

> *"further clarification on how the planning system can contribute to the creation of an environment that is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities (including assisting with the removal of barriers to shared space) will be set out within the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)".*

130. In recognising programmes and policy that promote constructive shared space the Committee also notes the view expressed during the stakeholder event that shared space should not be forced on communities and those that feel safe living in their own areas should be left to do so.

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91 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence & Appendix 3: Written submission - Northern Ireland Environment Link & Landscape Instituate

92 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - InterAction Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum, Forthspring InterCommunity Group

93 http://www.planningni.gov.uk/downloads/livingplaces_-_web.pdf

94 Appendix 6: Other Papers and Correspondence - Department of the Environment

95 Ibid

131. **The Committee acknowledges the creative and innovative ways in which some organisations and community groups are creating shared space. The Committee believes that shared space has meaning where it offers something purposeful and is not created artificially around a contrived concept. The Committee recognises the role which the Department of the Environment can play in shaping the built environment, most recently through the Living Spaces Design Guide, and welcomes the proposal that further clarification will be brought forward within the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement. The Committee therefore recommends that the development of meaningful shared space is incorporated as an essential component in delivering a united and shared community.**

Relationship building and trust

132. Throughout the course of the Inquiry the Committee heard that developing relationships and trust was a key requisite for building a united community. And whilst this may be a less tangible aspect of good relations work, its importance was emphasised to Members by witnesses through their written and oral evidence, and the stakeholder events.

133. The calls from stakeholders and practitioners for an opportunity to engage with policy development and decision making reflect a need for positive, strong relationships between sectors, as well as between and within communities. This sentiment was reflected during the oral briefings when NILGA told Members that "*building relationships and sustaining the structures and the relationships is important in the long term*."[96] Sylvia Gordon from Groundwork NI reminded the Committee that "*You do not build relationships with organisations - you build relationships with people and individuals within organisations*." She went on to say "*over the years there has been a huge investment in relationships in North Belfast…we have been working to build those relationships, build trust and build respect*."[97] Her views were echoed by Maureen Hetherington from the Junction in Derry/Londonderry who said "*For organisations that have been built up on trust and mutual respect over a long time, that is a really important part of peace building*."[98]

134. In its consideration of issues around funding, discussed earlier in this report, the Committee became aware of the pressures faced by organisations through high turnover of staff and the constant chase for financial resources. Members also heard anecdotally of increased levels of burnout in the sector with a heavy reliance on individuals with enthusiasm and passion for the task in hand. Given the time required to build relationships and the importance of trust in developing good relations work the Committee notes the challenges that these issues bring to furthering this agenda. During evidence with representatives from RCN Members were advised that those involved in good relations activity are 'ageing and tiring out', and that there is not a cohort of younger people coming up behind to carry on the work.[99] Recognising the contribution of individuals within the sector Peter Osborne from CRC said, "*I am genuinely amazed by the commitment of people who do this work. By and large, the people who do it could be better paid and have different job satisfaction if they went off and did something else*".[100]

135. Indeed a view emerged from several organisations, also echoed at the stakeholder event, that terminology around building a united and shared community should evolve from good relations to 'good relationships.' Evangelical Alliance noted that research points to the vital contribution good community relationships make to a balanced and healthy life, and to physical and mental health; and suggested that all policies should be 'relationship-proofed' for their potential impact on community and family relationships.[101] Forthspring Inter Community Group supported the need for relationship building as a necessary pre-condition

96 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Good Relations Programme: Northern Ireland Local Government Association

97 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project, Groundwork NI

98 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction, Holywell Trust

99 Appendix 6: Other Papers and Correspondence - Record of Informal RCN evidence

100 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project, Groundwork NI

101 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland

for tackling issues at interfaces.[102] The RCN suggested that relationship building and trust at a local level are crucial, a view also supported by the Youth Council NI which stated that "*relationship building across divided communities remains central to the process of maintaining lasting reconciliation*."[103]

136. During the stakeholder event Members were reminded that involving communities in decision-making is much a more time and resource intensive process; and whilst not the final solution to building a united and shared community, aids the building of relationships and promotes engagement. The Committee notes the approach of the Department of Justice in this regard as it makes progress on the headline action to reduce the number of physical interface barriers by 2023, which officials relayed to Members during the stakeholder event. Officials also advised that there is soon to be an evaluation of the three year period of work to date, to help shape and inform the future direction of that programme.

137. **The Committee notes that time is needed to build relationships, respect and trust between all those involved in building a united community, and that this process is often more untidy than neatly defined funding cycles. The Committee also expresses its concern regarding the high level of burnout affecting those working within the sector, including a heavy reliance on specific individuals, albeit individuals with enthusiasm and passion for the task in hand. The Committee therefore recommends that Departments, arm's-length bodies, and statutory agencies have an appropriate support mechanism in place for the organisations that they are funding; and that they strongly encourage their funded organisations to consider suitable succession planning.**

138. **Furthermore the Committee recommends that the Department gives consideration to adopting the term 'good relationships' as a broader framework in which to consider delivering policies and programmes to promote a united and shared society.**

Urban interfaces

139. In its terms of reference the Committee sought views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed, and the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to the removal of interface barriers. Stakeholders addressed this issue through their written evidence and this was explored in oral evidence sessions, and also during the stakeholder events. The Committee also held an external meeting at the premises of InterAction Belfast in West Belfast to specifically explore these issues further. Broader consideration of matters relating to the involvement of communities in decision making is discussed elsewhere in this report.[104] In its written response the Presbyterian Church in Ireland indicated that the aspiration to remove the physical barriers in interface areas over a ten year period is to be commended.[105]

140. In written evidence the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) advised that there are 88 peace walls in Belfast, mostly within or adjacent to Housing Executive estates, with 20 of these in NIHE ownership. In evidence to the Committee representing NILGA, Alderman Tom Ekin told Members in oral evidence that "*When I asked the junior Minister*, "*Who do I speak to about T:BUC in Belfast?", I was given the names of three people to speak to, but I wanted one name; the name of the most responsible person. Belfast has found that it has been general. There are no specific targets or goals. There is nobody in charge; it is left to the council to find its own way."*[106]

102 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Forthspring Inter Community Group

103 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Youth Council NI

104 See "Community Planning and teh Involvement of communities in decision making

105 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Presbyterian Church in Ireland

106 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Good Relations Programme - Northern Ireland Local Government Association

141. This highlights both the wide geographical spread of urban interfaces and that there is no one central point of contact in respect of them all, which in turn reflects the complexity of addressing issues at urban interfaces.

142. In its written evidence to the Committee the Institute for Research in Social Sciences - Ulster University provided information on its 2012 research "*Attitudes to Peace Walls*"[107] conducted by Dr Byrne, Dr Gormley-Heenan and Professor Robinson, and funded by OFMDFM. The research, which was finalised prior to the development of the T:BUC strategy, found that the single-minded focus on physical barriers creates a significant policy risk including insufficient emphasis on the requirement to generate significant social and economic change to achieve the wider target; a lack of a mechanism to allow for a staged approach which takes account of very different local circumstances; and a lack of a mechanism for a graduated response to changing local circumstances.[108]

143. These perceived risks were reflected in the evidence received by the Committee. In written evidence CRC noted that segregation at interfaces has other consequences - such as sustained and ingrained patterns of poverty.[109] Groups working in Derry/Londonderry suggested that focusing on the physical element of interfaces without addressing the psychological challenges would be potentially damaging.[110] Other organisations not traditionally associated with community relations also sounded a note of caution with the NI Association for Mental Health warning that "*creating a society characterised by good relations and community integration where interface barriers are removed is impossible without taking the psychological impact of Northern Ireland's history into account*".[111]

144. These views were echoed in oral evidence to the Committee. Sylvia Gordon advised that "*tackling interfaces is not just about tackling the physical interface but about tackling the social issues that are on either side of those issues*"[112]; whilst Professor Knox told Members that "*these peace walls will not be tackled just by pulling down the wall – these communities are the most deprived and they feel it.*"[113]

145. The *Attitudes to Peacewalls* research also indicated that communities living near the walls had not yet been reassured that they would not be negatively affected by the removal of the walls; and that the level of fears between communities has not reduced sufficiently since the beginning of the peace process or that trauma in the past creates significant grounds for suspicion of anything which promotes integration.[114]

146. Again, these findings were reflected in the views considered by the Committee. For example the NI Youth Forum observed that "*the fear you might have of the 'other side' is nearly directly proportionate to the distance you live from an interface*."[115] Indeed this was a concern that had been raised by Members during a briefing with junior Ministers following the announcement of the T:BUC strategy in May 2013.[116] The Committee also notes views from stakeholders that malevolent forces continue to have influence in some communities.

147. The young people from the Bytes project had some innovative ideas on how to approach the process of removing physical interface barriers on an incremental basis. One suggestion

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107 http://www.ark.ac.uk/peacewalls2012/peacewalls2012.pdf [Accessed 18 June 2015]

108 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Institute for Research in Social Sciences, Ulster University

109 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Community Relations Council

110 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction, Holywell Trust

111 Appendix 3: Written submissions - NI Association for Mental Health

112 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project, Groundwork NI

113 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams

114 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Institute for Research in Social Sciences, Ulster University

115 Appendix 3: Written submissions - NI Youth Forum

116 http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/official-report/committee-minutes-of-evidence/session-2012-2013/may-2013/together--building-a-united-community-ministerial-briefing/ [Accessed 18 June 2015]

was a 'clear wall' with those living on either side of the wall having an opportunity to see people going about their daily lives and recognise that many of the same social and economic challenges are the same. Another proposal was to open a gate in a physical interface barrier for a couple of days with an event organised to encourage people to come and walk through. The young people recognised the risks involved in these approaches but suggested that, while some people may feel insecure once the walls are gone, maybe now was the time to take the risk. However this was not a universal view and others felt that by taking down the walls between the Falls and the Shankill there would be 'mayhem'.

148. In tackling issues at interfaces witnesses from Derry/Londonderry advised of a strong relationship between statutory agencies and key community workers through the Interface Monitoring Forum which advocates an approach of regularly sitting around a table to talk about the issues.[117] The witnesses believed that this forum has been a positive vehicle through which to address issues as they arise.

149. Another view expressed by an organisation working at an interface in Belfast was that, once a situation has been diffused, support from statutory and other agencies dissipates:

> *"When anything happens at an interface area… the policy and community workers are called out. However, when there is nothing happening we are building the peace and making sure that things are happening properly, suddenly everybody disappears, there is no money available, and we are scrabbling around for pennies".*[118]

150. **The Committee recognises that the issues that need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed are complex, and like other areas of good relations work, there is no uniform approach. The Committee notes the concerns of those living immediately beside interface areas who feel that the physical barriers provide a certain amount of security and safety; recognises that malevolent forces continue to have influence in some communities, which in turn contributes to the desire to maintain physical manifestations of division in urban areas; and acknowledges the challenge in communicating a vision for a united and shared society to communities at interfaces. The Committee commends the consultation and preparatory work that is ongoing with regard to the commitment within Together: Building a United Community to reduce the number of interface barriers, in conjunction with local communities. The Committee respects the views of those who do not yet feel secure enough to progress on the removal of interface barriers, and supports the view that no peace wall should be removed without the consent and support of the communities that are living immediately beside it.**

151. **The Committee recommends that work to liaise with those living at interfaces to understand why they do not feel safe; and to encourage them to develop a vision for building a united and shared community continues. The Committee also encourages the Committee for Justice to undertake scrutiny of the work of the Department of Justice in this regard to ensure that the Assembly is fully appraised, and can input into this work as appropriate.**

152. **The Committee further notes concerns from stakeholders that too much emphasis is being placed on the removal of physical interface barriers, with little thought being given to the social and economic needs of those living closest to the peace walls. In taking this area of work forward the Committee recommends a holistic approach to the reduction of interface barriers, which might include localised regeneration initiatives, support for education and access to employment for everyone, and in particular young people.**

Contested space in rural communities

153. The Committee also sought views on how sectarianism and division can be addressed with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. Through written

117 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction & Holywell Trust

118 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - InterAction Belfast, Suffolk Community Group, Forthspring InterCommunity Group

evidence the Committee heard that there can be a lack of recognition that sectarianism exists in rural communities both from policy and decision makers, and amongst those who live in rural areas. In oral evidence Professor Hamber noted that:

> *"Broadly speaking there is significantly less focus on rural communities than there is on urban communities. You might say that more people live in urban areas, but in academia and a whole range of other fields there seems to be a lot less focus on rural areas."*[119]

154. During the stakeholder event Members heard that many within rural areas themselves do not recognise that there is a sectarian divide. This is indicative of the subtlety in addressing sectarianism in rural areas which may not have the same manifestations as physical barriers in urban areas, but where issues of attachment to area, locality and in some cases the very land itself can be emotive.[120]

155. In written evidence the RCN advised that, whilst physical barriers do not exist as they do in some urban areas, segregation is still widespread but can be harder for those living outside the area to perceive. Indicators of where segregation and sectarianism may be an issue in rural areas include communities where flags, emblems and memorials are perceived as 'marking territory'; land and property are only sold to members of the same community; contentious marches take place; or where attacks are carried out on symbolic buildings (like Orange Halls or GAA premises).

156. In 2009 CRC and RCN commissioned research to explore the issue of contested space outside Belfast.[121] The *Beyond Belfast* report found that barriers do exist in many rural communities, and while they may not be physical or visible, they have real effects in constraining and shaping the behaviour and attitudes of both individuals and communities.

157. The Committee explored issues relating to rural communities further through its external meeting at Ballymoney Community Resource Centre where it took evidence from a range of organisations working to build a united and shared community in that area.[122] The witnesses confirmed that just because a physical barrier does not exist, it did not follow that there were no issues regarding contested space in rural areas. Members heard one witness reflect that "*the work that we do, particularly on building community relations and addressing community tension, happens in all those areas. It is not just an urban issue*"; while another said "I *have worked with different groups of young people and have had similar conversations about their feelings that a shop, a street or a field in their area was a no-go area*."

158. There was a view that the seven headline actions of T:BUC had not been 'rural-proofed' along with a strong perception from the witnesses that rural communities receive disproportionately less in funding than interface communities in urban areas. Commenting on work that she had been involved with involving rural women in Co. Armagh, Charmain Jones from RCN observed that "*if I were to place that group in a very urban setting in Belfast, I would probably have thousands of pounds thrown at me*".[123]

159. Ms Jones also highlighted some of the challenges in building a united community in dispersed rural areas, including a lack of incentive for communities to come together, alongside an awareness that good relations issues in rural areas are constantly shifting.

160. The breadth and depth of discussion between Members and representatives of the RCN reflects the reality that the experience of those working to promote good relations in rural

119 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

120 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Rural Community Network

121 http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/master-beyond-report-web.pdf [Accessed 18 June 2015]

122 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Rural Community Network

123 Ibid

communities has much to contribute to the wider debate on building a united and shared society.

161. **Members commend the work of those organisations, large and small, dedicated to building a united and shared society within rural communities. The Committee notes the view that there is a lack of recognition amongst policy and decision makers that sectarianism exists in rural communities; and the view that initiatives designed to deal with issues of contested space in rural areas receive disproportionately less funding that communities at interfaces in urban areas. The Committee also acknowledges that there is a subtlety in addressing sectarianism in rural areas which may not have the same manifestations as seen in urban areas; and the perception that, historically, there has been a lack of creative thought and commitment as to how programmes designed to build a united community can be better catered for in a rural context.**

162. **In light of this, the Committee recommends that the seven headline actions of T:BUC are rural-proofed by OFMDFM as soon as possible, and that any remedial action identified is carried out quickly. Further the Committee recommends that Executive Departments, statutory agencies and arm's-length bodies tasked with the development of programmes aimed at building a united community proactively mitigate against a perceived urban bias.**

Mixed Communities

163. In response to a call for evidence on the challenges faced by those at interfaces in both urban and rural areas, the Committee received submissions and heard oral evidence from people living, and working, in communities that are mixed. Whilst not specifically part of the terms of reference the Committee notes the headline action within T:BUC for the development of shared neighbourhoods and support for shared communities throughout the strategy.

164. During the stakeholder event Members heard a perception from those working in mixed communities that shared neighbourhoods are not considered as 'valuable' as divided communities. Some of those attending also expressed disappointment at the focus on new shared spaces when they felt that many existing shared spaces need support to be sustained.

165. In written evidence to the Committee Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (BCDA) advised Members that shared neighbourhoods do not happen by accident and cautioned that: "*it is not enough to build housing estates and designate them as 'shared' or to create a 'charter' for a shared neighbourhood and ask residents to 'sign up to' or 'buy into' it*."[124] BCDA also advised that, just because neighbourhoods are shared, it does not follow that dealing with difficult issues is any less challenging. A resident and trader from Rathfriland advised Members in a written submission that mixed communities *"have to be proactive and build a 'normal' society street by street."*[125]

166. In its written submission Armoy Community Association (ACA) indicated that,

> *"single identity areas and facilities are backed on either side of the divide. However a …mixed identity group with a shared facility…operating at an interface does not have the luxury for volunteer support similar to the social capital existing in a single identity community".* [126]

167. ACA went on to observe that "*to run with a cross community agenda is still out of kilter with the political context currently operational*".

124 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Ballynafeigh Community Development Association

125 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Rathfriland resident

126 Appendix3: Written submissions - Armoy Community Association

168. During oral evidence with the RCN Members heard a perception that mixed communities 'pay the price' for being peaceful.[127] Through evidence the Committee also noted the view that that it can be difficult for voices from mixed communities to input into policy and decision making on matters relating to building a united community with BCDA noting that "*there is much attention paid to establishing new shared neighbourhoods and urban villages but no attention paid to the learning from existing practice and the networks that have been built over time*".

169. The Committee acknowledges the efforts of local community and voluntary groups in maintaining mixed communities and commends those who have worked hard to sustain those communities, often in challenging circumstances. Members note the perception that these communities have 'paid a price' for being peaceful, and that it can be difficult for voices from mixed communities to be heard in discussions about building a united and shared community. **The Committee recommends that a greater emphasis is placed on the lessons learned by those who have something to contribute to the wider discussions about developing shared neighbourhoods; and in particular that representatives from these mixed communities should participate in the relevant thematic groups to be established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel. Further the Committee recommends that, in establishing a T:BUC forum, consideration is given to specifically inviting representatives from mixed communities to participate.**

General comments on approaches to addressing sectarianism and division

170. **The Committee acknowledges the breadth and depth of approaches to addressing sectarianism and division and the rich contribution that this work makes to building a united community. The Committee recognises that there is no uniform approach to addressing sectarianism and division; and recommends that the Department continues to deploy flexibility when developing policy and devising programmes relating to these matters.**

171. **In considering approaches to addressing sectarianism and division the Committee notes the need for careful monitoring of the balance between the Ministerial Panel co-ordinating the processes around pursuing a united and shared community, and the community and voluntary sector which is often charged with the delivery of the outcomes of this agenda. The Committee strongly urges the Department to develop, and continue to build on, good relationships with the community and voluntary sector in this regard.**

Mental Health/Intergenerational Trauma

172. Issues relating to mental health and intergenerational trauma were raised consistently through written and oral evidence and the stakeholder event. Whilst the Committee took a decision early on in its Inquiry that it would not take specific oral or stakeholder evidence in relation to mental health/intergenerational trauma, it would be a mistake to discern from this that Members have low regard for these matters. On the contrary the Committee felt that it would be impossible to deal with this subject fairly in an already wide-ranging Inquiry.

173. That notwithstanding, the Committee is keen to reflect the written evidence it did receive in this regard. The Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health (NIAMH) advised the Committee that "*creating a society characterised by good relations and community integration where interface barriers are removed is impossible without taking the psychological impact of this history into account*."[128] This was echoed by the WRDA which highlighted the issue of "*trans-generational trauma*" whereby the events experienced by an older generation are transmitted to, and affect, subsequent generations even though the latter have no direct experience of the events that are relayed. WRDA also highlighted a growing legacy issue in communities manifest through increasing levels of mental ill-health, intergenerational trauma,

127 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Rural Community Network

128 Appendix 3: Written submissions - NI Association for Mental Health

increasing suicide levels (affecting all ages), drug and alcohol abuse, depression and anxiety. This was a view also shared by young people who responded to the Committee's call for evidence. The Youth Councils of Newry, Mourne and Armagh highlighted mental disability and illness as the "*great unspoken prejudice*"[129] whilst the young people participating in the Bytes event noted the challenges faced by friends and peers who find themselves homeless and without the necessary support to find housing and employment.

174. In evidence to the Committee Professor Shirlow from Queen's University, Belfast, apprised Members of his research conducted in partnership with the University of Notre Dame, the Catholic University of America in Washington DC and Ulster University, which considered a longitudinal study of relationships between political violence, sectarianism and the well-being of children living in segregated communities in Belfast. He advised that:

> *"if we go down that route of looking at family, we can show that, in families where there are mental health problems amongst the parents, some of it being trauma-related from the past that is being reproduced."*[130]

175. He went on to suggest:

> *"I still think that in politicising the conflict in our society, the one thing we missed out on was care for the people who were harmed… We should have been building a society around coping and caring. Much of this is reflected by the fact that many of these families, who are producing kids who behave in this way, are very traumatised by the past. We should have based our whole process on trauma recovery and harm intervention."*

176. During the same evidence session Professor Hamber noted that, whilst Northern Ireland is considered to be a relatively low-crime society, the statistics for suicide and mental health are higher than those for the rest of the UK. Professor Hamber subsequently provided the Committee with three research papers relating to this area:

- Tomlinson, M (2007) "The Trouble with Suicide - Mental Health, Suicide and the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Review of the Evidence"
- O'Neill, S, Ferry F, Murphy S, Corry C, Bolton, D et al (2014) "Patterns of Suicidal Ideation and Behaviour in Northern Ireland and Associations with Conflict Related Trauma"
- Hamber, B Gallagher E (2014) "Ships passing in the night: psychosocial programming and macro peacebuilding strategies with young men in Northern Ireland".

177. The Carnegie UK Trust submitted its "*Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland Report*"[131] to the Committee as written evidence to the Inquiry. The report explores the importance of wellbeing and the positive impact it can have on policy development, and highlights three specific areas of negative wellbeing in communities across Northern Ireland. These include:

- Social isolation and loneliness - a general breakdown of communication across society including lack of family and peer support and physical isolation;
- Mental ill-health - many barriers to progress are rooted in experiences of people during the Troubles;
- Fear - personal safety, future, quality of life.

178. Carnegie UK Trust suggests that a focus on "wellbeing" would provide a more holistic and inclusive agenda and approach to policymaking, with the potential to help the Executive get beyond the concept of a divided community, to one that embraces diversity and includes a politics that re-engages groups which are currently alienated.

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129 Appendix 3: Written submissions - Women's Resource and Development Agency

130 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

131 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Carnegie UK Trust

179. The Committee notes that the Stormont House Agreement[132] includes a commitment that the Commission for Victims and Survivors' recommendation for a comprehensive Mental Trauma Service be implemented. It is anticipated that this service would operate within the NHS but work closely with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS), and other organisations and groups who work directly with victims and survivors.

180. **The Committee acknowledges that many individuals across society in Northern Ireland cope with conflict-related mental health and trauma related issues; and that efforts to build a united and shared society require a holistic approach. The Committee recommends that the Executive undertakes closer cross-departmental consideration of issues relating to mental health and intergenerational trauma in a way that links to the trauma initiative of the Stormont House Agreement.**

Good Relations Indicators

181. The final aspect of the Committee's terms of reference was a request for evidence on the perceived effectiveness of the draft Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions. The draft indicators were out for consultation from January to March 2014 and views expressed to the Committee during the Inquiry were on the basis of these draft indicators.

182. In oral evidence CRC advised that:

> *"I think that everybody accepts that the indicators that are there at the moment are probably making the best of what is available and that they fall short of making a very clear and causal relationship between the information that is gathered and the impact of the implementation of the policy".* [133]

183. Professor Shirlow noted that without proper working definitions of what is trying to be changed, measurement of that change would be difficult[134], while some at the stakeholder event cautioned that the sort of change that T:BUC wants to achieve can be hard to measure.

184. Representatives from Derry City Council suggested that there could be greater synergy between the District Council Good Relations Programme and the Good Relations Indicators and noted that the indicators as drafted "*are very high level for us to be able to measure at a local level without employing researchers… it would be very difficult for councils to measure those indicators, because it would require university level analysis".*[135]

185. Those attending the stakeholder event suggested that T:BUC would benefit from an interim evaluation to highlight areas where a change in approach or direction might be required, and to identify good news stories.

186. The final agreed Good Relations Indicators were issued by the Department to the Committee in June 2015[136] and the Committee intends to discuss these further with officials early in the 2015/2016 Assembly session.

132 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/390672/Stormont_House_Agreement.pdf [Accessed 12 June 2015]

133 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Community Relations Council, Belfast Interface Project, Groundwork NI

134 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Professor Peter Shirlow & Professor Brandon Hamber

135 Appendix 2: Minutes of Evidence - Good Relations Programme: NI Local Government Association

136 Appendix 4: OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence - 11 June 2015

187. **The Committee recommends that OFMDFM conducts an interim evaluation of Together: Building a United Community to assess the progress of the seven headline actions to identify good news stories, and to ensure that any alterations required are identified early with time to make any adjustments that may be necessary.**

Northern Ireland Assembly

Appendix 1

Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee Relating to the Report

Wednesday 2 July 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Leslie Cree
Miss Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr George Robinson
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Mike Nesbitt

In Attendance: Ms Karen Jardine (Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Keith McBride (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Joe Westland (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Sabra Wray (Clerical Officer)
Ms Shauna Mageean (European Project Manager) Item 2 only
Ms Roisin Kelly (Bill Clerk) Item 3 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 3 only
Mr Jonathan McMillen (Legal Advisor) Item 3 only

2:31pm Mr Attwood left the meeting.

10. Forward Work Programme

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered the draft Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Terms of Reference for its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to make a call for evidence on the Terms of Reference to a list of stakeholders.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a draft notice be published in local papers in line with Assembly protocol and that the notice inviting submissions be placed on the Committee's webpage.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Committee Office would scope options for a study visit with regard to the Inquiry.

5:02pm The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 17 September 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Leslie Cree
Miss Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr George Robinson

In Attendance: Ms Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:27pm The meeting began in public session.

3:43pm Mr Attwood left the meeting.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted a list responses received to date with regard to its Inquiry into Building a United Community, and instructions on how to access papers relating to the Inquiry through the Electronic Committee Pack system.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a weekly update on submissions received to date; and that written submissions to the Inquiry would be uploaded to the Committee's webpages each Tuesday, except in exceptional circumstance where the Committee may be consulted before publications.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Community Relations Council requesting an extension to the closing date for written submissions to the Inquiry, and noted that similar requests had been received from others.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to extend the closing date for written submissions to its consultation to Friday 10 October 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask Assembly Research to compile a list of expert witnesses with regard to the Inquiry from whom it could consider requesting oral evidence.

4:54pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 24 September 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Leslie Cree
Miss Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr George Robinson

Apologies: Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Jimmy Spratt

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2.02 pm The meeting began in public session.

4. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted the current list of submissions received in response to its call for evidence to its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

2.08pm Mr Lyttle joined the meeting.

3.12 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 1 October 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Miss Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr George Robinson
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies Mr Leslie Cree
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:04pm The meeting began in public session.

4. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted the current list of submissions received in response to its call for evidence to its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee noted its earlier decision to copy any issues or submissions relating to shared/integrated education to the Committee for Education for consideration, and agreed to forward the submission from the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education to that Committee.

2:25pm Mrs Hale joined the meeting.

3:46pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 8 October 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Roy Beggs
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:01pm The meeting began in closed session.

5. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted the current list of submissions received in response to its call for evidence to the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

3:30pm Mr Beggs joined the meeting.

4:25pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 15 October 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Ms Roisin Kelly (Bill Clerk) Item 2 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 2 only

2:05pm The meeting began in closed session.

6. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted the current list of submissions received in response to its call for evidence to the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee noted its earlier decision to copy any issues or submissions relating to shared/integrated education to the Committee for Education for consideration, and agreed to forward a number of submissions to that Committee.

3:01pm. The Chairperson adjourned the meeting

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 22 October 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Attwood

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Ms Roisin Kelly (Bill Clerk) Item 1 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only

2:01pm The meeting began in closed session.

2:21pm The meeting moved into public session.

3:00pm Mrs Hale left the meeting.

8. Committee Inquiry into Building a United Community

3:05pm Departmental officials joined the meeting.

Departmental officials Ms Linsey Farrell, Mr Michael McGinley and Ms Donna Blaney appeared before the Committee for questions and discussion on the Together: Building a United Community Strategy. The briefing was recorded by Hansard.

3:15pm Mrs Hale re-joined the meeting.

The officials agreed to provide further information as requested on a number of issues

3:40pm Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Committee Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted that over 60 written submissions had been received with regard to its Inquiry into Building a United Community, and noted late submissions from Belfast City Council, the Department of Justice and the Department for Social Development.

3:42pm Mrs Hale left the meeting.

The Committee noted a draft plan with regard to taking oral evidence in relation to the Inquiry and areas for potential visits.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the draft plan and return to the issue at the next Committee meeting.

4:03pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 5 November 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mrs Brenda Hale

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:01pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted the themes emerging from the written evidence to its Inquiry into Building a United Community and considered proposals for the next phase of evidence gathering. The Committee noted the Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education currently being undertaken by the Committee for Education, and noted its previous agreement to pass any issues arising in the course of its own Inquiry relating to education to that Committee for information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to host a roundtable event with Departments and statutory agencies responsible for headline actions within the Together: Building a United Community strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to approach NILGA with regard to receiving oral evidence from local councils during a formal Committee meeting.

2:17pm Ms Fearon joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Community Relations Council to give oral evidence during a formal Committee meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to explore the possibility of hosting a roundtable event with organisations involved in community relations work across Northern Ireland.

The Committee considered a paper from Assembly Research which suggested a number of academics from whom the Committee might consider inviting to give oral evidence.

2:20pm Mr Attwood left the meeting.

Mr Lyttle proposed the motion: "That Dr Duncan Morrow be invited to provide evidence to the Committee with regard to its Inquiry into Building a United Community.'"

The Committee divided on the motion:

Ayes 1;
Noes 4;

AYES	**NOES**
Mr Lyttle (Deputy Chair)	Mr McIlveen
	Mr Moutray
	Mr Nesbitt (Chair)
	Mr Spratt

Ms McGahan and Ms Fearon did not vote.

Members noted that, prior to leaving the meeting, Mr Attwood had indicated his support for inviting Dr Morrow to provide evidence.

The motion fell.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Professor Brandon Hamber, Dr Neil Jarman, Professor Colin Knox and Professor Peter Shirlow to give evidence to the Committee, subject to their availability.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to explore the possibility of inviting evidence from Northern Ireland Environment Link and the Landscape Institute Northern Ireland, including the possibility of a site visit to a project.

The Committee noted that a number of organisations had responded specifically to the Inquiry on the matter of a definition for the term 'good relations'.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider issues relating to a definition of good relations at a later stage.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to engage with the Rural Community Network regarding the challenges faced at rural interface areas; and agreed to consider the possibility of a visit to a rural area.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite oral evidence from InterAction Belfast, Forthspring InterCommunity Project and the Peace Walls Programme with regard to the challenges at urban interface areas and the role of communities in decision making.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to explore the possibility of a roundtable event with young people in conjunction with the Assembly Education Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite oral evidence with regard to the role of women in good relations and their involvement in policy and decision making.

The Committee noted that other emerging themes in the written evidence included the role for civic society within Building a United Community; and issues relating to mental health and inter-generational trauma.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that, while these areas are both important and merit further consideration, it is unlikely that the Committee will be able to consider them in depth during the course of the Inquiry.

2:41pm The meeting moved into public session.

3:42pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 12 November 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Michael Copeland

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Ms Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only

2:01pm The meeting began in closed session.

2:27pm Mr Attwood left the meeting.

2:36pm The meeting moved into public session.

4. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted two additional submissions to its Inquiry into Building a United Community from the Northern Ireland Women's European Platform and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

2:46pm Mr Attwood returned to the meeting.

2:59pm Mr Maskey joined the meeting.

3:22pm The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 19 November 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr David McIlveen

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Mr Colin Pidgeon (Research Officer) Item 1 only
Ms Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk) Item 11 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 11 only

2.02 pm The meeting began in closed session.

3. Chairperson's Business

T:BUC Summer Camps/Co-design workshops

The Committee noted an invitation from OFMDFM to the co-design workshops to help inform the development and design of the programme of 100 summer schools/camps in summer 2015.

4.57 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 26 November 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2.10 pm The meeting began in public session.

5. Correspondence

OFMDFM: Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM on a range of issues on the implementation of Together: Building a United Community

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add the response to the papers relating to its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

2.27pm Mr Maskey joined the meeting.

4.06 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 3 December 2014
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Ms Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk) Item 3 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 3 only
Mr Jonathan McMillen (Legal Adviser) Item 3 only

2.27pm The meeting began in open session. In the absence of a decision-making quorum the proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5) and moved to agenda item 2.

The Committee moved to agenda item 8.

2 Inquiry into Building a United Community - Briefing from Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

2.28pm Representatives from the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council joined the meeting.

Mr Peter Osborne, Chairperson, Community Relations Council; Ms Jacqueline Irwin, Chief Executive, Community Relations Council; Ms Sylvia Gordon, Director Groundwork NI; and Mr Joe O'Donnell, Director, Belfast Interface Partnership appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

2:45pm Ms Fearon joined the meeting.

Agreed: Ms Irwin agreed to provide further information on a query relating to funding provided by CRC.

3:40pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: With regard to the Inquiry the Committee agreed:

(i) The draft timetable for gathering oral evidence;

(ii) That the roundtable event scheduled for Wednesday 28 January should include Departments, statutory agencies and community organisations;

(iii) The draft agenda and invitation letter for the stakeholder event; and

(iv) To provide the names and details of additional groups to Committee staff by 5 December.

5:24pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 14 January 2015
Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mrs Brenda Hale

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Ms Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only

2:06pm The meeting began in closed session.

2:40pm The meeting moved into public session.

9. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Professor Knox and Ms McWilliams

3:02pm Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams joined the meeting.

Professor Colin Knox and Ms Sarah McWilliams appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community, and specifically in relation to the evaluation of the Contested Spaces / Interface Programme, funded jointly by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

5:01pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 21 January 2015
Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:00pm The meeting began in closed session.

2:08pm Mr Spratt left the meeting.

2:09pm Mr McIlveen left the meeting.

2:12pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

2:15pm The meeting moved into open session.

3. Chairperson's Business

Inquiry into Building a United Community - Stakeholder event

2:30pm The Chairperson reminded Members of the Stakeholder event scheduled for Wednesday 28 January with regard to the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The Committee noted the table plan and agenda for the event, and the Chairperson asked Members to indicate their availability to participate.

2:27pm Mr Spratt returned to the meeting.

2:36pm Ms Fearon left the meeting.

9. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Professor Shirlow and Professor Hamber

2:40pm Professor Peter Shirlow, Queens University Belfast and Professor Brandon Hamber, Ulster University joined the meeting.

Professor Peter Shirlow and Professor Brandon Hamber appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community, The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

2:43pm Ms Fearon returned to the meeting.

2:50pm Mr Attwood joined the meeting.

The witnesses agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a number of issues.

4:00pm The witnesses left the meeting

4:56pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 4 February 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only

2.02pm The meeting began in closed session.

7. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by NILGA representatives on the District Councils Good Relations Programme

The Chairperson thanked those who had participated in the stakeholder event held on 28 January and the Committee discussed arrangements for the planned external meeting on Wednesday 18 February.

2.21pm Witnesses from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association joined the meeting.

Alderman Tom Ekin, NILGA Vice President and Belfast City Council; Ms Sue Divin, Good Relations Officer, Derry City Council; and Ms Angela Askin, Good Relations Officer, Derry City Council appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

The witnesses agreed to provide further information on a number of issues as requested.

3.12pm The witnesses left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to OFMDFM to ask if the Department has accepted the recommendations contained within the NISRA evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme which was completed in 2012, and when those recommendations will be implemented.

8. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by NILGA representatives on Community Planning

3.13pm Witnesses from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association joined the meeting.

Ms Karen Smyth Head of Policy NILGA, Ms Jackie Patton Mid and East Antrim Council and Ms Mary Kerr NI Strategic Migration Partnership appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

3.17pm Mr Attwood left the meeting.

3.27pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

3.29pm Mrs Hale joined the meeting.

The witnesses agreed to provide further information on a number of issues as requested.

3.42pm The witnesses left the meeting.

3.42pm Ms McGahan left the meeting.

4.30pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 11 February 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copelan
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2.03pm The meeting began in open session.

4. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted responses from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association regarding membership of the Political Partnership Panel and lobbying of OFMDFM Ministers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include both items of correspondence in the papers for its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

9. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Northern Ireland Environment Link and the landscape Institute

2.19pm Witnesses from Northern Ireland Environment Link and the Landscape Institute NI joined the meeting.

The Committee noted a number of research papers provided by Professor Hamber following the briefing on 21 January 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add the research papers to the evidence base of its Inquiry.

Dr Stephen McCabe Northern Ireland Environment Link and Mr Pete Mullin from the Landscape Institute appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

2.24pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting due to plenary business.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 18 February 2015
Interaction Belfast, 638 Springfield Road, Belfast

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Jimmy Spratt
Ms Megan Fearon

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2.30pm The meeting began in public session with the following Members present:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson), Mr Alex Attwood, Mr Alex Maskey and Mr Stephen Moutray. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5), and the Committee moved to the first evidence session.

8. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Interaction Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum and Forthspring Inter Community Group

The Chairperson thanked Inter-Action Belfast for hosting the meeting and facilitating the necessary arrangements.

2.31pm Witnesses from Inter-Action Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum and Forthspring Inter Community Group joined the meeting.

Ms Roisin McGlone, Chief Executive Officer, Inter-Action Belfast; Ms Caroline Murphy Team leader Suffolk Community Forum; Mr Terry Donaghy, Chair, Suffolk Community Forum; and Mr Johnston Price, Project Worker, Forthspring Inter Community Group, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

2.40pm Ms McGahan joined the meeting.

3.00pm Mr Lyttle joined the meeting.

3.02pm Mrs Hale joined the meeting.

3.47pm The witnesses left the meeting.

3.27pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

3.54pm Mrs Hale returned to the meeting.

3.56pm Mr Maskey left the meeting.

9. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction and Holywell Trust

The Committee noted a report of the stakeholder event held on 28 January 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the report to those invited to attend the stakeholder event.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the report on its webpages relating to the Inquiry; and to include the report in the papers for its Inquiry report.

The Committee noted correspondence from a member of the public recommending the 'Street Games UK' concept as an appropriate model of engagement with regard to the summer camps proposed under Together: Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department and ask it to consider Street Games UK in the design of summer camps for 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the correspondence in the papers for its Inquiry report.

The Committee noted correspondence from Ballynafeigh Community Development Association requesting a meeting with Members to discuss the organisation's work.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chair would arrange an informal briefing with an invitation open to all Members to attend.

3.58pm Witnesses from Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction and Holywell Trust joined the meeting.

Ms Maureen Hetherington, The Junction; Mr Michael Doherty, Director, Peace and Reconciliation Group; and Mr Gerard Deane, Manager, Holywell Trust, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

4.03pm Mr Maskey returned to the meeting.

4.04pm Mrs Hale left the meeting.

4.48pm Ms McGahan left the meeting The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).

4.52pm Ms McGahan returned to the meeting.

4.57pm The witnesses left the meeting.

5.04pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Monday 2 March 2015
Room 21, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only

1:32pm The meeting began in closed session.

1:36pm Mr Lyttle joined the meeting.

1:40pm Mrs Hale joined the meeting.

1:45pm Mr McIlveen left the meeting.

1:46pm The meeting moved into open session.

5. Matters Arising

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted papers that had been provided by Suffolk Community Forum at the previous meeting which gave more information about the Suffolk Community Pocket Plots initiative.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the papers in its Inquiry report.

1:59pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 4 March 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr David McIlveen
Mrs Brenda Hale

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 2 only
Mr Jonathan McMillen (Legal Adviser) Item 2 only

1:41pm The meeting began in public session with the following Members present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson), Mr Alex Maskey, Ms Bronwyn McGahan and Mr Stephen Moutray. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5), and the Committee moved to the first evidence session.

7. Correspondence

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted correspondence from the Director of the Bytes Project thanking the Committee for the opportunity for young people from Bytes to attend an event with the Committee on Together: Building a United Community.

The Chairperson advised Members that he had received a phone call from Inter-Action Belfast advising that funding from the Community Relations Council has not been renewed beyond the end of March 2015.

Agreed: Members agreed to invite Inter-Action Belfast to write to the Committee providing detail of the situation; and to forward that letter with a brief cover note from the Committee Chair requesting the views of the Department on the situation and clarification of whether the Pathfinder funding scheme provide a short-term solution.

2:53pm Mr Maskey left the meeting.

9. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2.00pm in Ballymoney Resource Centre on Wednesday 11 March 2015.

4:23pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
(EXTRACT)

Wednesday 11 March 2015
Ballymoney Resource Centre, Acorn Business Centre, Ballymoney

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only
Mr Jonathan McMillen (Legal Adviser) Item 1 only

2:00pm The meeting began in closed session.

10. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by representatives from the Rural Community Network

Agreed: The Committee to include a summary note of the informal meeting with the Bytes Project in the Inquiry report and to upload it to the website.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to combine the two scheduled evidence sessions with representative organisations from the Rural Community Network.

3:15pm Witnesses from representative organisations from the Rural Community Network joined the meeting.

Mr Gerry Burns, Armoy Community Association; Mr Colin Craig, Corrymeela; Ms Charmain Jones, Rural Community Network;, Ms Lynn Moffett Ballymoney Community Resource Centre; Ms Rose Smyth Causeway Rural and Urban Network; and Mr Sandy Wilson North Antrim Community Network appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community, and specifically in relation to rural issues. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

3:30pm Mr McIlveen left the meeting.

The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

3:38pm Mr McIlveen returned to the meeting.

4:13pm Ms McGahan left the meeting.

The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

4:21pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

4:21pm As the quorum to take evidence was lost the Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

(EXTRACT)

Wednesday 18 March 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Ms Bronwyn McGahan

In Attendance: Ms Stella McArdle (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

2:15pm The meeting began in public session.

5. Correspondence

Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM regarding Street Games UK.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the response to the Manager of Tackling Awareness of Mental Health Issues and to include the papers in the Committee's Report on its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

6. Inquiry into Building a United Community

2:28pm Witnesses from Northern Ireland Environment Link and the Landscape Institute joined the meeting.

Dr Stephen McCabe, Policy and Projects Officer, Northern Ireland Environment Link; and Mr Pete Mullin, Policy Representative, Landscape Institute NI, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

2:53pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

2:56pm Mr Spratt joined the meeting.

3:09pm Mrs Hale left the meeting.

3:12pm The witnesses left the meeting at.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of the Environment to request information on how the recently published 'Living Places - An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland' connects with Together: Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to seek an update on the design of the urban villages, as proposed

in Together: Building a United Community; and seek information on how organisations can engage with the design process.

5:00pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 25 March 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr David McIlveen

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mrs Marion Johnson (Clerical Supervisor)

2:06pm The meeting began in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

6. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered a paper on issues arising from its Inquiry into Building a United Community

Agreed: The Committee agreed to release the issues paper to OFMDFM officials prior to the evidence session scheduled following the Easter recess.

The Committee noted a summary of the discussion held informally with representatives of the Rural Community Network following the adjournment of the meeting on 11 March.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the summary discussion with the Inquiry papers.

The Committee noted a response from the Department to its queries regarding the implementation of the recommendations contained with the NISRA evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the response to NILGA for information; and to include the response in the Inquiry papers.

The Committee noted an update on the summer camp co-design workshops which were held in December and January; and noted that £1m has been secured to implement the Summer Camp Pilot Programme 2015.

Agreed: The Committee to include this correspondence in the Inquiry papers and agreed to write to the Department to request: a written briefing on the proposed summer camps; and a budget profile for T:BUC initiatives over the lifetime of the strategy.

4:48pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 13 May 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Michael Copeland
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 1 only
Ms Éilis Haughey (Bill Clerk) Item 2 only

2:11pm The meeting began in closed session.

7. Correspondence

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from the Department of the Environment regarding its Inquiry into Building a United Community and 'Living Places' - An Urban Stewardship and design guide for Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the response in the papers for the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

9. Inquiry into Building a United Community.

3:17pm Departmental officials joined the meeting.

Ms Linsey Farrell, Ms Donna Blaney, Mr Michael McGinley and Mr Peter Robinson appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community, and specifically in relation to the themes which have emerged from written and oral evidence received from stakeholders. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Officials agreed to provide further information on a number of issues including comparative figures regarding funding for good relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and the identification of additional spend due to the Together: Building a Untied Community strategy; an update on the progress of finalising the Good Relations indicators; and an update on the Buddy Scheme, administered by the Department of Education.

4:00pm The officials left the meeting.

4:01pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 20 May 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr David McIlveen

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Richard Reid (Clerical Officer)

2:03pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered a confidential paper outlining areas for potential recommendations on the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to bring the paper back for a fuller discussion at next week's meeting.

2:05pm The meeting moved into open session.

2:12pm Mr Maskey joined the meeting.

2:14pm Mr Spratt joined the meeting.

3:34pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 27 May 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

2.00pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered a confidential paper outlining areas for potential recommendations on the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to bring the paper back for a fuller discussion at next week's meeting.

2.02pm The meeting moved into open session

6. Correspondence

Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM regarding the content of the Summer Camps Pilot Programme; and a further response from the Department following a request for information those organising summer camps and the geographical spread of the camps.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include both items of correspondence in the Building a United Community Inquiry papers.

3.58pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 3 June 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Bill Team - for agenda item 2 only)

2.05 pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee discussed a confidential paper which set out the emerging issues arising from the evidence received in regard to the Inquiry into Building a United Community; the departmental response where this was available; and draft areas for potential recommendations.

2.48pm Mr Spratt joined the meeting.

3.10pm Ms McGahan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for staff to prepare an initial draft report on the Inquiry including the findings and draft recommendations as discussed

3.22pm Ms McGahan returned to the meeting.

4.42 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 17 June 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Maskey

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)

2.08 pm The meeting began in closed session.

2. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted an initial draft of the Report on the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: Members agreed to forward any comments on the draft to staff before Friday lunchtime.

3.56 pm The meeting moved into open session.

7. Correspondence

Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted correspondence from OFMDFM following a briefing from Departmental officials on the progress of Together: Building a United Community, which included the final, agreed Good Relations Indicators.

Agreed: Members agreed to include the response in its Inquiry into Building a United Community papers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to invite officials to brief the Committee on the final Good Relations Indicators, including how they will be monitored; and to ask why the Buddy Scheme was not deemed eligible for funding through the £50m shared education programme funded jointly by Atlantic Philanthropies and the Department of Education.

5.39 pm The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 24 June 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Jimmy Spratt

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)

3.39pm Mr Moutray left the meeting.

3.45pm Mr Maskey left the meeting.

3.51pm Ms Fearon left the meeting.

3.52pm The meeting moved into closed session.

12. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee noted a late submission from the Community Arts Partnership to the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the submission in the papers for the Inquiry Report.

The Committee noted a discussion at the Committee for Employment and Learning regarding a bid to PEACE IV for the United Youth Programme.

4.00pm Ms Fearon returned to the meeting.

The Committee considered a draft of its Report on its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

4.14pm Mr Maskey returned to the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to provide comments to Committee staff by noon on Friday 26 June.

4.34pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]

Wednesday 1 July 2015
Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Michael Copeland
Ms Megan Fearon

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Bill Team - for item 1 only)

2.02pm The meeting began in closed session.

11. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered the final draft of its Report on its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 1 - 21 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 22 - 27 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 28 - 31 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 32 - 42 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 43 - 47 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 48 - 60 of the report.

Agreed: Members noted that a line had been inadvertently deleted from the initial draft report that had been considered on 24 June and agreed that it would be reinserted at paragraph 63.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 61 - 69 of the report as amended.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 70 - 75 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 76 - 80 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 81 - 100 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to substitute "groups" for "communities including women and young people" at paragraph 108.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 101- 114 of the report as amended.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 115 - 121 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 122 - 124 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 125 - 131 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 132 - 138 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to substitute "closest to" for "in the shadow of" at paragraph 152; and to add "for everyone, and in particular young people" to the end of that paragraph.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 139 - 152 of the report as amended.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 153 - 162 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 163 - 171 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 172 - 180 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed paragraphs 181 - 187 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Executive Summary.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the list of appendices to be included in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Deputy Chairperson should approve the relevant extract from the Minutes of Proceedings of this meeting for inclusion in Appendix 1 of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Report be the fifteenth Report of the Committee, and ordered the report to be printed and published.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to lay a typescript copy of the Report in the Business Office; and to issue a typescript copy to the Department, with a request to respond to the key conclusions and recommendations contained in the report within 12 weeks.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to table the following motion for a debate on the Report in the next Assembly session:

"That this Assembly notes the Report of the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (NIA 257/11-15) on its Inquiry into Building a United Community; and calls on the First Minister and deputy First Minister, along with their Executive colleagues, to implement the recommendations contained in the Report".

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request that the debate be scheduled for the week commencing 28 September to coincide with Community Relations Week.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to embargo the Report until the debate in Plenary.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to share an embargoed copy of the Executive Summary and Key Conclusions and Recommendations with other statutory committees, given that the Inquiry has looked at a cross-cutting issue and the report includes a recommendation for other Committees.

4.02pm The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

[EXTRACT]



Appendix 2

Minutes of Evidence

22 October 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Miss Donna Blaney	*Office of the First*
Mrs Linsey Farrell	*Minister and deputy*
Mr Michael McGinley	*First Minister*

1. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I welcome Donna Blaney, Michael McGinley and Linsey Farrell to the Committee. Linsey, we received your paper at 5.00 pm yesterday. What was the issue with the late delivery?

2. **Mrs Linsey Farrell (Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister)**: There was no issue other than that was the time that it was issued on behalf of Ministers.

3. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: On behalf of Ministers.

4. **Mrs Farrell**: Ministers clear the briefing.

5. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: At 5.00 pm yesterday. When was the briefing given to them for clearance?

6. **Mrs Farrell**: I do not have the exact date that we put it up to the private office.

7. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Roughly.

8. **Mrs Farrell**: About a week to 10 days ago. I can check the exact date and get back to you.

9. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I would be interested in that. I do not think that there is anything contentious about the papers, so why should we not get them in a timely manner? We have expended a lot of effort in the last 12 months on liaising with the head of the Civil Service, the junior Ministers and the principal Ministers in an attempt to receive papers in a timely manner.

10. **Mrs Farrell**: I will check the exact date and get back to you.

11. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you. Would you care to make some opening remarks?

12. **Mrs Farrell**: Thank you, Chair, for your introduction and the invitation to appear today to update the Committee on progress on Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC).

13. As you know, the strategy was published on 23 May last year following the announcement of seven strategic headline actions by the First Minister and deputy First Minister. We had the opportunity to brief the Committee in February and welcome the opportunity to provide a further update today.

14. The strategy sets out a range of actions and commitments against four strategic priorities: children and young people; shared community; safe community; and cultural expression. However, the range of commitments and actions extends well beyond the seven strategic headlines. In total, there are in the region of 42 other actions and commitments that, compositely, will contribute to achieving our collective vision of a shared, united and reconciled community.

15. With the agreement of members, I propose to focus on progress against the seven headline actions, the delivery architecture required to monitor implementation and other key commitments arising from the strategy. Members of the Committee have acknowledged that they received a copy of a briefing paper in advance of the meeting. Hopefully, you have been given an opportunity to look at the areas that I will cover in the briefing.

16. Senior responsible owners (SROs) for the seven headline actions have been appointed by Departments with lead responsibility. Compositely, they make up the membership of the good relations programme board, which has met on six occasions to date. The programme board reports directly to the ministerial panel on the implementation and delivery of the strategy.

17. I will now move, in no particular order, to the headline actions. The first is the United Youth programme. The design day on 23 January, which the Committee was made aware of during our last visit, was the culmination of an extensive period of stakeholder engagement, and almost 300 participants attended. The co-design process begun by OFMDFM at that time is being continued by the lead Department, which is the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).DEL has appointed a United Youth adviser to take forward the next design stage, and that process is being supported by a design team that comprises representatives from a number of Departments and statutory agencies. Young people have been engaged with separately up to this point, and it is intended that they will also be invited shortly to become part of the design team. The design team has produced a draft outcomes and principles framework, and that will be tested during the forthcoming 2015 pilot phase. OFMDFM funded the first United Youth pilot through the central good relations fund, with 50 young people taking part in the Headstart initiative. Findings from the evaluation of that initiative so far are very positive.

18. The Department of Education (DE) leads on the headline action of 10 shared education campuses. The Department received 16 expressions of interest under the programme, and, on 1 July this year, the Minister announced the first three projects to be supported. They are St Mary's High School, Limavady and Limavady High School; a shared education campus for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School in Moy; and a shared education campus for Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle. Those projects will now proceed to the planning stage, and the target is to have three business cases submitted and approved by the end of 2014. A second call for applications opened on 1 October, and the deadline for submissions for further proposals is 30 January 2015. In addition to that, good progress is also being made on the Lisanelly shared education campus programme, which is over and above the 10 shared education campuses.

19. The Department for Social Development is leading on the coordination of the headline action on urban villages. A high-level design specification has been developed, and the first two locations identified are Colin and the Lower Newtownards Road. A strategic board chaired by OFMDFM junior Ministers has been set up to meet monthly. Its membership includes representatives from DSD, OFMDFM, the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) and Belfast City Council. Resources were secured through June monitoring to allow SIB to take forward the all-important stakeholder engagement to enable work to continue in the two urban village locations.

20. OFMDFM is responsible for taking forward work on the headline action of 100 summer schools and camps. A number of summer schools and camps took place during this summer, and further schemes are scheduled for the Halloween mid-term break. An additional £300,000 was secured in June monitoring to enable further work on summer schools and camps. Belfast City Council and the Department of Education will run further schemes and pilots, primarily at Halloween. Expressions of interest have been invited from other councils, and decisions on those will be taken in the coming weeks. A programme board has been established to oversee progress on this headline action, and the board had its first meeting on 18 August. External members of the board are from DE, Belfast City Council and the Community Relations Council (CRC),

and we have just secured agreement for Youthnet to be represented. OFMDFM has worked very closely with Belfast City Council, and a consultant has been identified and appointed to carry out an evaluation of the schemes that have taken place. That evaluation will inform the final design of the summer schools and camps programme. Co-design workshops with a range of key stakeholders are planned for early December, and we hope to engage specifically with young people as part of that process.

21. The Department for Social Development is leading on the 10 shared neighbourhoods and, through an initial scoping exercise, has identified potential sites and a timeline. Eleven potential sites have been identified that could deliver more than 600 social homes, but the Department is also exploring major mixed-tenure developments through joint ventures by housing associations and private developers. The first social housing development at Ravenhill Road is scheduled to open shortly, and construction work has commenced on a further three sites.

22. The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has been appointed to take forward the cross-community sports programme. The purpose of the programme is to use sport as a tool in building good relations across our community and to break down divisions. A pilot will be delivered during this financial year, and it will be in areas that have experienced specific interface tensions and significant deprivation.

23. Finally, there is the headline action on the removal of interface barriers by 2023. Work on the removal of barriers commenced in 2011, and the Department of Justice (DOJ) has been taking forward a lot of that work, both before and since that date. Design proposals are at an advanced stage to start work towards establishing a 10-year programme to reduce and eventually remove the interface barriers. An important point is that this will involve working very closely with the local community. The number of interface structures has been reduced from 59 to 53, and engagement is ongoing and very active in 40 of the 53 remaining areas. There have been some positive developments this year. Security fencing was removed from the North City Business Centre in April and from Moyard Crescent in May, and the upper vehicle and pedestrian gates at Springmartin Road were removed in August.

24. That brings me to the end of the updates on the seven headline actions, and I will now briefly bring the Committee up to date with progress on other aspects, including the establishment of an equality and good relations commission. The strategy included a commitment to establish a commission that would act as an independent statutorily based organisation to provide policy advice and a challenge to government. Following a gateway project management review, a transition board was established to oversee the change management process relating to the establishment of the new commission. The membership of the board includes the chairs of the Equality Commission (ECNI) and CRC, representatives from OFMDFM and the Departmental Solicitor's Office (DSO), along with an independent member. The objective of the board is to ensure that T:BUC objectives relating to the establishment of the commission are successfully delivered within an agreed timescale. Members of the transition board are concentrating on exploring approaches to delivering the relevant T:BUC objectives in advance of the new primary legislation being enacted.

25. The review of good relations funding was a core commitment in Together: Building a United Community. The review was taken forward in two phases. Phase 1 concluded at the end of March this year, and the SIB team commissioned to take forward the work drew upon existing evaluation and review material to inform phase 2, which involved substantial stakeholder engagement, including four geographic sessions held across Belfast, the north-west,

mid-Ulster and Fermanagh, which were attended by a total 144 participants. A final session in Crumlin Road Gaol involved a further 112 participants. Feedback was extremely positive, and stakeholders reported being very welcoming of the opportunity to engage. The second phase of the review ended at the end of June, and, since then, we have been working closely with the SIB to finalise the report, which will go to Ministers shortly. Further engagement with stakeholders will be taken forward on foot of Ministers' consideration of the report.

26. Before I conclude, I can also report that the ministerial panel has met on two occasions. It is the central part of the delivery architecture set up to drive forward and oversee the implementation of Together: Building a United Community. As I mentioned at the outset, this panel is supported by a good relations programme board, which comprises senior responsible owners from all Departments, not just those with responsibility from headline actions. This group has now met six times, and the next meeting is planned for mid-November.

27. Work is also at an advanced stage to establish the range of thematic subgroups outlined in Together: Building a United Community, and, compositely, these structures will drive forward on the implementation and facilitate a fresh approach to stakeholder engagement and collaborative leadership on building good relations across our community. I welcome the Committee's ongoing interest in the implementation of a strategy that is, as I think that we all agree, vital to everyone. We look forward to working closely with the Committee as the implementation phase develops across all strands of the strategy. Thank you again for the opportunity, and I am happy to take any questions.

28. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Linsey, thank you very much for that very comprehensive and welcome brief. It is a very exciting strategy. Can you update us on the budget, please?

29. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes, certainly. We have allocated good relations funding of almost £10 million in this year. All OFMDFM funding streams application criteria have been closely aligned with the four key themes of the strategy, as I outlined earlier, to ensure that projects being delivered by our stakeholders are focused on the delivery of the strategy's objectives. As I also mentioned, a number of Departments were successful in securing money through June monitoring as well. Those were OFMDFM, DCAL and DOJ, and that money was secured specifically to take forward work on Together: Building a United Community.

30. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What is the budget for the 10 shared campuses?

31. **Mrs Farrell**: DE is leading on that, so I do not have that information here, but I can find it and write back to you on the specific budget.

32. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: There are 10 shared campuses in addition to Liasanelly, which is going ahead. As far as I know, the cost of Lisanelly is £120 million. If we take that as the template, the 10 shared campuses, which is one of seven T:BUC initiatives, will cost £1·2 billion. I put it to you, Linsey, that we do not have it.

33. **Mrs Farrell**: That has been under consideration by the ministerial panel.

34. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, you accept that we do not have that money.

35. **Mrs Farrell**: We accept that there is an issue with resourcing across all Departments.

36. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I will tell you what the issue is: the money does not exist.

37. **Mrs Farrell**: We are working with Departments very closely and actively on assessing the resource that they need each year so that we have a very detailed profile. We will interrogate those figures very closely to ensure that we inject some realism into what

Departments are telling us and match that with what is available. It was noted at the last ministerial panel meeting that relying on the normal budgetary processes of applying for funding in monitoring rounds is putting Departments in a very difficult position. We will discuss that in more detail when a more detailed analysis of the resource implications will be brought to the next ministerial panel meeting.

38. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: This is in the context of the Executive having to go to Treasury exceptionally and ask for a loan of £100 million, which is less than the cost of one of the 10 shared campuses, which is one of only seven initiatives under T:BUC. I put it to you again that the money does not exist for Together: Building a United Community.

39. **Mrs Farrell**: We accept that the public expenditure environment is very difficult and challenging, and that has been noted by all Departments at the ministerial panel. As I said, we are working proactively with Departments to produce the realistic financial data that we need but also to look at what work can be taken forward on a no-cost/ low-cost basis. I accept that a lot of the headline actions require huge expenditure, but in the shared education campuses, for example, the ethos is sharing, so that is what we are working on with Departments. We are looking at outcomes and at what we can achieve with the resources available to us, notwithstanding the huge challenge that is still before us and the need to constantly be putting up the need for financial resources to support this. That is why we are doing that work through Departments, through the programme board and at the ministerial panel.

40. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, you are asking Departments what is achievable in the short term.

41. **Mrs Farrell**: We are looking at the short term, medium term and longer term.

42. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am hearing an acceptance that there is not enough money for these big ambitious projects but that you will do what you can.

43. **Mrs Farrell**: No, we accept that there is a scalability issue, which is about looking at how we roll things out and the timing of the roll-out. We are absolutely not going back from the challenge to us in Together: Building a United Community. We recognise the challenging context that we are all in, and the Departments are all fully committed.

44. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is there a timeline for digging the sods of the 10 campuses?

45. **Mrs Farrell**: That is what we are looking at with Departments. We need a detailed timeline from them and an analysis of the initial costs.

46. A lot of the costs, as you can appreciate, and DE is a good example of this, were estimates before the call for expressions of interest. So, at that stage, the Department could not accurately anticipate what would come forward in those applications. Now that those three applications have come in and there will be a second call, there will be a lot more information and data for the Department to go on when making an accurate assessment of the resource requirements and a more realistic and accurate associated timeline. It is that sort of work that we are taking forward with all Departments.

47. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is over a year and a half since OFMDFM said to the people of Northern Ireland, "Be of good heart. We've got a great idea. We're going to build 10 new shared school campuses". A year and a half later, you do not have the money or the timeline. You do not have anything to give the people.

48. **Mrs Farrell**: Very clear projects have been submitted and accepted by the Department of Education, and there has been a commitment to complete the business cases by the end of this year. There is a second call for shared education campuses, which sends a very clear message about DE and the

Executive's commitment to the good relations agenda. We all accept the difficult economic climate that we are in, but that is not an excuse for inaction. We have lots of evidence of the amount of work by all Departments to continue to push forward this agenda.

49. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I remain of the view that the money does not exist.

50. **Mr Lyttle**: I agree. I am on record as saying that the strategy is inadequate. I still do not see a comprehensive action plan or targets and deadlines with budget allocations, and it is difficult for the public or MLAs to assess progress in that context.I think that it is weaker than the shared future strategy, which had a triennial action plan attached to it.

51. However, to engage with what is available to us, there were 16 expressions of interest in the shared education campuses and three projects were awarded some type of funds, whatever they were. What were the selection criteria used to make those decisions?

52. **Mrs Farrell**: Again, as DE had the lead responsibility, it set those criteria. DE has advised that the Minister of Education was keen to ensure that the chosen projects would be of a high standard and meet all the criteria that it had set. To ensure the best chance of successful long-term and sustainable collaboration among the schools involved, the Minister wanted to ensure that the projects were building on a foundation of sharing that had already been established in those three areas, and that there would be support in the local community for the proposals. It is my understanding that that was the basis of the choice of those three. That is why only three were picked from the 16 that were submitted and a decision was taken to go out for a second call.

53. **Mr Lyttle**: Maybe I did not catch it there, but are unsuccessful proposals being assisted to try to develop them into successful proposals?

54. **Mrs Farrell**: I am not totally sure of that, but we can go back to the Department and find out what the process is for doing that.

55. **Mr Lyttle**: OK. I am not clear on what an urban village is, but I am not going to ask you to tell me because that might take a while. What two urban villages have been selected? What were the criteria used to select those two areas — Newtownards Road and Colin? I have endeavoured to seek this clarification, but I am not sure if I ever got it: does the Newtownards Road urban village include the Short Strand area?

56. **Mrs Farrell**: The core aspects of the urban village concept were to create community space; improve the area and its aesthetics; provide a range of uses within the area; and create a community focus, hence the term urban village. It was felt that Colin and the lower Newtownards Road met those criteria through work that had been done previously, levels of deprivation in the area, or community infrastructure. The actual boundaries of the lower Newtownards Road urban village are still being considered. I can seek some certainty around that and get back to you.

57. **Mr Lyttle**: That would be helpful. I am a bit concerned that, having now asked about my fifth question of that nature, no one has been able to answer it just yet. It would seem quite strange that a strategy seeking to build a united community would identify an area as an urban village and not encompass an area of interface tension within that urban village, but maybe you can clarify that for us.

58. It says that 11 potential sites have been identified for the shared neighbourhoods. Do you know what those sites are? What criteria were used to select those?

59. **Mrs Farrell**: We can get a list of the 11 sent to you. I can tell you that construction works have commenced on Ravenhill phase 2; Felden Mill, Newtownabbey; and Crossgar, Saintfield.

I can get a list of the 11 sites from DSD and report that back to the Committee.

60. **Mr Lyttle**: It says that membership of the ministerial panel has been widened to include local government, the voluntary and community sector, and key statutory organisations. Do you know what those organisations are?

61. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes. The ministerial panel held a meeting on 2 October. The Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) was represented at that meeting. Local government, through the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), was invited but unfortunately had to send apologies. The Housing Executive also nominated a representative onto the ministerial panel. It is the intention that, once the thematic subgroups are established, the chairs of those groups will be represented on the ministerial panel to ensure that other voices and perspectives on good relations are at the table.

62. **Mr Lyttle**: Was the Community Relations Council approached about membership of the ministerial panel?

63. **Mrs Farrell**: It was not approached for the last meeting, but that is something that we are actively considering in the context of establishing the equality and good relations commission.

64. **Mr Lyttle**: Is it possible to get a list of where the summer schools took place in the summer of 2014 and the budget that was allocated to them?

65. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes, we can do that.

66. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you know the number of summer schools off the top of your head?

67. **Miss Donna Blaney (Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister)**: There have been 125 so far. They would not all be classed exactly as summer schools or camps, but they are summer interventions involving children and young people that will inform the design of the pure summer schools camps next year.

68. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Would any of those 125 have happened anyway?

69. **Miss Blaney**: A number of them would have happened anyway through our planned interventions programme, but we have allocated an additional £300,000 to interventions to be delivered that will

70. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How many of the 125 would have happened anyway this summer?

71. **Miss Blaney**: I do not know about the numbers of camps, but certainly our baseline budget for that was £300,000.

72. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Right, but you know that there were 125 summer camps.

73. **Miss Blaney**: That have been delivered to date; yes.

74. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: But you do not know how many would have happened anyway? Surely you know.

75. **Miss Blaney**: It is just about when the funding came through. We had baseline funding of £300,000, and we then increased the level of funding to deliver some more. I do not have the breakdown of that with me, but we can get it for you.

76. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Again, that would be useful. We understand that some of the questions that you are being asked will mean that you have to liaise with other Departments. I appreciate that we cannot, therefore, expect you to come back in 10 days and that you may need a bit longer.

77. **Mr D McIlveen**: Going back to the budgetary side of things, a lot of the progress that has happened already on Together: Building a United Community already has been underwritten by PEACE moneys, Atlantic Philanthropies and other organisations. How much government money do you expect to be short by in order to take each of these 10 campus projects forward? Have there been any commitments from other organisations to support it? It sounds like a colossal amount of money

when you talk about £120 million per campus. How is that money actually broken down? How much of it is coming from the Department? How much of it is being sourced from other places?

78. **Mrs Farrell**: That is part of the exercise that we are taking forward with Departments at the minute. We are asking them for their profile for each year, but also where they have sought funding from alternative sources such as PEACE IV when it is operational, to identify what the amount is, if that is relevant, and to assess the funding gap from there. That is something that we are taking forward with Departments across all the headline actions.

79. **Mr D McIlveen**: So the success or failure of these projects is not based solely on the Executive budget; is that what you are saying?

80. **Mrs Farrell**: Not solely. In some cases, there will be alternative sources of funding identified.

81. **Mr D McIlveen**: OK. There was also a point raised about the Community Relations Council a little bit earlier. It is something that I wanted to raise anyway. I am paraphrasing slightly here, but it was suggested recently that not enough was being done on good relations and so on. A figure that was discussed with me is that, since the Belfast Agreement, somewhere in the region of £3 billion has been spent on promoting good relations in Northern Ireland. Is that a figure that you recognise? If it is not, have any figures been estimated within the Department that suggest how much money has been spent?

82. **Mrs Farrell**: I have certainly heard that figure referenced before. I have also heard the figure of in and around £36 million to £40 million over the current CSR period. That is just what OFMDFM has directly invested in promoting good relations; it does not take into account the external funding from funding sources like PEACE. OFMDFM provides match funding with PEACE as well, so that is also a significant contribution on behalf of the Department. Even more recently, through June monitoring, we in the Department allocated an additional £220,000 to the Community Relations Council to support good relations activity on the ground through its pathfinder scheme. Some £70,000 of that was specifically targeted towards race hate interventions in light of recent circumstances.

83. So I do not think that the Department would accept that it has not been showing leadership on this issue. We can show clearly that £1·4 million has been made available this year to the central good relations fund. That is going straight to the delivery of good relations work on the ground and to community groups and practitioners who are taking this work forward. A lot of that is being delivered through the Community Relations Council.

84. **Mr D McIlveen**: That is very helpful; thank you.

85. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I will just follow up on that, Linsey, because this session is being reported by Hansard. On the budgets for those 10 campuses, David asked a very valid question about other potential sources of income. David mentioned Atlantic Philanthropies, and you mentioned PEACE IV. I heard you say that other sources would, 100% for sure, contribute to the creation of those campuses. Are you content that that goes on the record?

86. **Mrs Farrell**: They will be explored as opportunities.

87. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Ah, well, you see, I think you —

88. **Mrs Farrell**: We cannot give any certainty around Peace IV —

89. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I thought you did, you see.

90. **Mrs Farrell**: — because it is not operational as yet.

91. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I thought that, in your answer to David, you did suggest that definitely —

92. **Mrs Farrell**: That was not the intention, because Peace IV is not operational yet.

93. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Just to avoid doubt, which may only be in my mind, that is being explored but there is no guarantee at the moment that a single penny will come from anywhere else but Departments.

94. **Mrs Farrell**: Not at this point.

95. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is great. Thank you very much.

96. **Ms McGahan**: Thank you for your presentation. I am familiar with Moy Regional Primary School in County Tyrone. I had a number of engagements with the school. I know that if the groundwork had not been done over the last number of years, a shared education model would not have worked for them. Therefore, the groundwork was absolutely vital. I would appreciate it if you could give me any more information that you have on the development of that campus. You said that you hoped to receive businesses cases by the end of 2014.

97. **Mrs Farrell**: The Department of Education will be completing that business case process. We can certainly get any information that the Department has on the development work with those three campuses. We will see what we can find out and get back to you on that. However, the business cases will go specifically to the Department of Education.

98. **Ms McGahan**: With regard to developing a significant programme of cross-community sporting events, I would like you to give serious consideration to my constituency in Dungannon where we have the fastest-growing population in the North, which is down to the ethnic minority population. I know that the soccer clubs in the Dungannon area do a significant amount of work with that population. Therefore, it would be important to consider that, because it is a rural area as well.

99. **Mrs Farrell**: DCAL is taking forward the cross-community sports programme, and I reported earlier that it is running out a pilot. It has not released the areas that that will be in, but it has said that it will concentrate on participation from minority ethnic groups, people with disabilities and young women. We are very conscious of the whole urban/rural issue within the context of implementing the strategy, and we have been working very closely with the rural community network to ensure that we are engaging on those specific rural issues.

100. **Mrs Hale**: Apologies for missing part of your presentation. If you have to repeat yourself, I apologise again. My question is on the back of what Chris said about the urban villages. Obviously we are waiting for another two to be identified. Are they going to be specific to greater Belfast? Is one of the essential criteria that they have to be an interface area? I know that many areas in my constituency of Lagan Valley would benefit greatly from the core aspects of the programme, but they are not interface areas.

101. **Mrs Farrell**: The other two have not been announced, and I have not seen any suggested locations for those. That is not to say that they will all be in the Belfast area or, indeed, that they have to be what would traditionally be viewed as an interface community.

102. **Mr Spratt**: Thank you for the presentation. I have a couple of minor points. I want to go back quickly to the 10 shared campuses. Am I right in understanding that three of those are at business case?

103. **Mrs Farrell**: They have started the business case process, and the hope is that those will be completed by the end of this year.

104. **Mr Spratt**: With regard to the Pathways to Work programme, which DEL is leading on, I understood that there was hope that that would increase to 10,000 places a year. Where are we with that, and what has DEL delivered?

105. **Mrs Farrell**: At the minute, it has been doing a lot of stakeholder engagement to inform the design of the programme. Proposals were submitted for pilots

at the end of September, and DEL is probably in the process of selecting those at the minute. Following a development phase during October and November, pilot applications will be submitted in early December with a view to commencing pilots in January next year. I understand from DEL colleagues that those pilots will take a number of formats and structures, and the Department is very keen to get a variety in terms of delivery, to find out what ultimately will work really well in the final programme. It is very much a case of no one size fits all. That is why they are looking at various delivery mechanisms for those pilots. There will be very important work going on through the Department for Employment and Learning to evaluate what is coming out of all those pilots to inform the final design and to make sure that we get the best possible good relations outcomes from the programme.

106. **Mr Spratt**: I will just go to another aspect that you mentioned: the taking down of barriers and the opening of gates. You gave us a few examples. It has been made public that, in lots of areas, communities are not ready for barriers to be taken down. What has the Department of Justice done to liaise with those areas to try to get some of those barriers down, given that, in some areas, there are ongoing problems?

107. **Mrs Farrell**: That is absolutely right. The key component of all this is having community buy-in and involvement before any barrier can come down. There are some areas where stakeholder engagement and buy-in has been quite minimal. We are actively working with DOJ to see how best to take forward engagement in those specific areas.

108. Donna, you might be across more of the detail.

109. **Mr Spratt**: Do you know exactly what DOJ has done?

110. **Miss Blaney**: It is working very closely with the IFI-funded peace walls programme with the seven partners. Those are across Belfast and Derry/Londonderry. It is now working with us to explore where we can increase that engagement with the community where it has not been done, perhaps in east Belfast or the Shankill, outside the greater Belfast area. We have tried to ring-fence some additional funding that we might be able to use to get some expansion of that programme of seven groups rolled out this year.

111. **Mr Spratt**: Has anything been done in the south Belfast area?

112. **Miss Blaney**: We do not have a group in the south Belfast area at the moment.

113. **Mr Spratt**: There are some barriers there. Do you not think that DOJ should be there?

114. **Miss Blaney**: We have established a good model and want to actively roll that out and get more engagement with the community. You are right to say that sometimes the community is not ready to go to full engagement over the removal of the barriers. It is about peace building and the creation of the conditions to remove the peace walls. DOJ and ourselves are working with IFI on the peace impact programme, which is sort of a stage earlier than the peace walls programme and about bringing a community together that perhaps has not been engaged in peace building to start discussions with the relevant agencies.

115. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Linsey, back in March, we were advised that the seven headline actions were under consideration within the Department in advance of a ministerial panel meeting on 27 March. Can you update us on the status of those plans? Indeed, can we have sight of them?

116. **Mrs Farrell**: Again, that ministerial panel meeting did not happen at the end of March due to unforeseen circumstances. The meeting happened on 2 October. For that reason, we are working with Departments to revise their costs and final project plan designs. I can certainly find out whether those are something that could be shared with the Committee.

117. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It had to be postponed on 27 March and could not be convened until 2 October?

118. **Mrs Farrell**: It was challenging getting a date. We were very keen, as I said, to have all Ministers there and all Departments represented; that was the challenge.

119. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is that reflective of the challenge of trying to work on a cross-departmental basis?

120. **Mrs Farrell**: Not at all. We actually have very good and positive working relationships. I should say that, during that time, the good relations programme board continued to meet on a bimonthly basis in the absence of the ministerial panel being able to secure a date agreeable to everyone.

121. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I do not ask to imply that there is anything other than good relations. I just ask about the logistical difficulty of pulling everybody together. We tend to work vertically, and you are trying to work horizontally through government.

122. **Mrs Farrell**: That is why it is vital to have the programme board there and meeting regularly.

123. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We are obviously very interested in what people think of the urban villages. Concern was expressed that "the two urban villages programmes announced appear to have little or no good relations content and local minority communities appear to be excluded from the areas of benefit". Is that a valid criticism?

124. **Mrs Farrell**: It is certainly something that we are very conscious of and a criticism that we have heard. For that reason, we are working very closely with the Strategic Investment Board at this stage in structuring the stakeholder engagement and building in the good relations outcomes that we clearly want to see from urban villages. As it is a headline action in Together: Building a United Community, good relations is a key outcome that we will look for. It will be very important to factor that in at the design stage with stakeholders and all sections of the community.

125. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Another general observation was that, to a certain extent, it is top-heavy in terms of statutory input and that civic society has not had the role that it might have had.

126. **Mrs Farrell**: As we are at a very advanced stage in setting up the thematic subgroups, that will be the key place where other sectors, organisations, stakeholders and the all-important practitioners will be involved.

127. We are working actively with the Community Relations Council to develop a structured and constructive programme of stakeholder engagement across the four strategic priorities of Together: Building a United Community in an attempt to engage much more and recognise the practice and work that has gone in over very many years and find out what we can learn from that practice to ensure that we have practice-informed policy.

128. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: In terms of engagement, the codesign process for United Youth seemed to be a very good model. Is that being rolled out across the other six?

129. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes, to lesser and stronger extents —

130. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: To the extent that it fits.

131. **Mrs Farrell**: It certainly is, and it is something that we rolled out in light of the review of good relations funding.

132. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: At that January event, you had 300 youths at the Waterfront Hall. Do you update them?

133. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes. In fact, the Department for Employment and Learning has stayed in touch and carried forward that engagement. It held a follow-up youth event — a two- or three-night residential in Corrymeela at the beginning of September — and re-engaged with the vast majority of the young people whom we had engaged with in January at the Waterfront through the organisations

that we had engaged with to ensure that continuity. It will be important for them to build on that.

134. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is there no frustration coming back about nothing happening?

135. **Mrs Farrell**: There have been frustrations voiced, but more in terms of the engagement. The young people very much welcome being part of the process, and they will be part of the DEL design team. Our own junior Minister McCann attended that residential and was able to hear at first hand the views of the young people.

136. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: My interest is more in the extent to which they understand and accept the process and the length of time that goes into a process. If I promised one of my teenagers in January, "I'm going to do something good for you" and got to February without delivering, I would be in trouble.

137. **Mrs Farrell**: That has been balanced against them appreciating and welcoming the opportunity to be engaged and to contribute to the design to make sure that it is something that is right and meets their specific needs as young people.

138. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So that they see the value.

139. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes.

140. **Mr Lyttle**: I have a quick supplementary. You said that the Community Relations Council was not invited to the ministerial panel. Given that, out of a budget of approximately £10 million a year for good relations funding, you direct approximately £6 million to the Community Relations Council, and given the length of time it has been engaged in community relations work in Northern Ireland, why was it not asked to put forward a representative onto the ministerial panel?

141. **Mrs Farrell**: It was not invited because at the time it was thought that, within the context of establishing the equality and good relations commission — and we are actively looking at it should be one person from each of those organisations at the next ministerial panel meeting, or how best that representation can be included at the next meeting.

142. **Mr Lyttle**: So it may be included at a future date.

143. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes, that is something we are looking at.

144. **Mr Lyttle**: There was a comprehensive review of the structure, delivery and impact of existing funding delivery mechanisms carried out, which I understand has been completed. Is there a date for the publication of the report?

145. **Mrs Farrell**: We have been working with the Strategic Investment Board over the last number of weeks to finalise that report. That will shortly be with our Ministers, and we hope to re-engage with stakeholders following that.

146. **Mr Lyttle**: Are we not stakeholders?

147. **Mrs Farrell**: Yes.

148. **Mr Lyttle**: Why were we not engaged prior to the writing of the final report?

149. **Mrs Farrell**: I believe the Committee was invited to the stakeholder engagement sessions.

150. **Mr Lyttle**: OK.

151. **Mr Spratt**: You did not go, Chris.

152. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Donna, Michael and Linsey, thank you very much.

3 December 2014

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Mr Joe O'Donnell	*Belfast Interface Project*
Ms Jacqueline Irwin Mr Peter Osborne	*Community Relations Council*
Ms Sylvia Gordon	*Groundwork NI*

153. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: With us today are Peter Osborne, the chairperson of the Community Relations Council (CRC); Jacqui Irwin, CRC chief executive; Sylvia Gordon, director of Groundwork NI; and Joe O'Donnell, director of the Belfast Interface Project.

154. You are all very welcome. Peter, I invite you to lead off with some short opening remarks.

155. **Mr Peter Osborne (Community Relations Council)**: Chairman, thanks very much for inviting us along this afternoon. It is good to be here.

156. I will start by reinforcing with the Committee the importance of the work that it does and the importance of the review of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) that it is undertaking. The various people on the delegation today will have some input into the brief introductory comments, if that is OK, and will share some of the responses to questions. I say that because the Community Relations Council, with Jacqueline and me, is doing its work at regional level, but Sylvia and Joe are from organisations that have funding from the CRC and are really very active on the ground, getting their hands dirty doing coalface work. T:BUC is the strategy that supports that sort of work.

157. It is important that we recognise how far we have come as a society. When we engage on some of the issues and talk about some of the good relations, reconciliation and peace-building work that we almost automatically do now as individuals in this society, that is work that we could not imagine being able to do in the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s. It is important that we recognise the achievements not just of civil society in doing that work but of politicians across all the political parties in this place and in other places. It has been very significant. We sometimes get caught up in the short term or in the issues of the day and do not realise, or recognise sufficiently, the long-term strategic changes that have taken place in this society. This is not easy work, though. Although we have come some way in the past 20 years, there is an awful long way to go. I keep saying, and I make no apology for it, that, when we talk about getting to the sort of reconciled society that we want to see, it will take 20, 30, 40 or even 50 years to achieve that, because these are long-standing and deeply felt issues that touch the emotions as well as the everyday life of people across the community in the place in which we live. In some ways, it will be the young people — the youth — of today, who are perhaps not as caught up with the memories that we who lived through the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s have, who will be able eventually to deliver that reconciled society and, if you like, carry the burden, while also enjoying the benefit and bounty of a peaceful and reconciled society.

158. I want to touch on two or three issues very briefly before handing over to Sylvia, Joe and Jacqueline. One is to remind the Committee of some of the things that the peace monitoring report that the Community Relations Council produced

a few months ago stated. It talked about the moral basis of the Good Friday Agreement having been eroded. It talked about a lack of trust leading to a lack of progress. It talked about, in some respects in recent times, community relations having taken a backward step and the fact that we are not in a continually forward-looking, upward trajectory around some of the issues. There are ebbs and flows. I think that the responsibility on us all is to try to look strategically as well as specifically at issues and at how to get the ebb back into reconciliation and peace-building in the area.

159. The challenge for us is to build on the T:BUC document. T:BUC is a devolved document. That is an achievement in itself. It provides a framework. It provides some ambitious targets. We need to build on T:BUC, however. We need to take that as where we are at the minute and look even more strategically at where we need to go as a government and a civil society. We believe that reconciliation needs to be recognised as a greater priority in government and civil society, with greater ambition, more energy and vision around it that involves everybody — politicians and civil society as a whole.

160. We also believe that it is important to recognise the need to build rather than erode the infrastructure that is delivering some of the work on the ground. That takes us back to the need for long-term, outcome-focused resourcing. I touch on that briefly, and we may touch on it again. Resourcing also needs to be reasonably significant in the context of other things that government does, such as the targets for peace walls that the T:BUC strategy contains. If we allow the infrastructure to erode, society will pay the price for that in years to come. In some ways, that will create the context in which we could be looking at a more violent future. We need to engage the disengaged. The peace monitoring report referred to that. A report that came out today refers to it again. There are people on all sides of the community who feel detached or dislocated from, or, in some way, not enveloped by, the sort of processes that we have in this society at the minute.

161. We need to understand the cost of failure to address those issues. It is not just the cost — some of it physical and some of it financial — of a more segregated society now but the cost of creating the conditions in which we might go back to something that we do not want to go back to, which is a more divided society or even violence in the future.

162. Those are my brief comments. I will hand over to Sylvia first and then to Joe and Jacqueline, who will go into this in a little bit more detail and talk about some of the practice that there is and some of the needs in communities at the minute.

163. **Ms Sylvia Gordon (Groundwork NI)**: I am the director of Groundwork. We are a regional organisation, but we are based in north Belfast. Whenever I became the director of Groundwork, I thought that it was very important to make a difference locally, albeit that I was working for a regional organisation.

164. It is important to say as a caveat that I have to reference the partnerships that I work with and the collaborations that I undertake, because this is not about just one organisation. You do not build relationships with organisations; you build relationships with people and individuals within organisations. Therefore, whenever I talk about the "work", I will be referring to the work of Duncairn Community Partnership, of which Groundwork Northern Ireland is one of a number of founding members. We are a cross-community partnership based, as I said, in north Belfast.

165. Over the years, there has been huge investment in relationships in north Belfast, particularly at a number of what were once very contentious interfaces, including the one between the Limestone Road and Duncairn Gardens. We have been working to build those relationships, build trust and build respect, recognising that we have our differences. We want to achieve the

same vision and get to the same place. We have been fit to do remarkable things under the radar. It is important to note that that was a local effort undertaken by local people to make a difference to their neighbourhoods.

166. Therefore, the challenge, not only for us at a community level but for those here on the hill at Stormont, is to start getting our stars strategically aligned. We need investment and vision from the top down and the bottom up, and we need the two to join. We need investment in relationships and in the infrastructure that Peter referred to, and we need investment in regeneration.

167. Yesterday, the partnership hosted Senator Hart. There was cross-community representation at that meeting, along with representation from the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). Over the past three years, through IFI funding, we have been fit to engage locally about vision and what a place might look like if we came together and started looking pragmatically at interfaces. However, there have been real challenges with the capital funding and regeneration work that needs to happen. For example, there is a huge linear site opposite Groundwork where there is a green fence that is owned by the DOJ. Ongoing consultation was undertaken by local people, and there was agreement reached to take that interface down and replace it with something more pleasing and more in line with what is up and down the street. We found huge challenges in getting that small part of capital funding. I am not talking about millions but about £50,000 to £70,000.

168. That is where our stars are not aligned, and we are not strategically aligned when it comes to investment and the type of models that we need in Northern Ireland to make regeneration happen. It is very obvious, given the cuts in public funding, that that funding will not be sourced from the public sector. There is less resource and more competition. How do we deal with that? How do we attract inward investment into an area, and how does the voluntary sector work in partnership with the private sector to inspire and create regeneration? Those are the types of conversations that we need to start having. There has been talk about asset transfer, and we have had some models of asset transfer. In itself, asset transfer is all right, but we need large-scale investment. Through our consultation through the partnership, we know that people want to see investment in their local neighbourhoods. They want to see improvements, not only in the place itself but in the opportunities that are there. They want to traverse one area to the other, and they are doing so. However, tackling interfaces is not just about tackling the physical interface but about tackling the social issues that are on either side of those interfaces.

169. Duncairn Community Partnership can and will provide examples of work that we has done. The Alexandra Park gate is one such initiative. Last week, we had the removal of the barrier in Newington Street in north Belfast at the Limestone Road. What I am saying is that communities are in a certain place but that they are getting very frustrated at the lack of strategic vision coming from Stormont. We need to see confidence, we need to see strategy and we need to see a plan that is resourced in order to help us achieve. We are in a dire situation, as we can see by looking at the papers and at the news every night. What is going on is not good, and it makes people very frustrated.

170. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thanks, Sylvia.

171. Peter, you should have received a message that we allow 10 minutes for the opening remarks.

172. **Mr Osborne**: Yes, we did. I am not sure how much time we have taken.

173. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Over 10 minutes. We will take Joe, and, if you do not mind, Jacqueline, we will pick up your views in the question-and-answer session.

174. **Mr Joe O'Donnell (Belfast Interface Project)**: Thank you very much. I

appreciate that and will try to keep this as brief as possible.

175. I am the director of the Belfast Interface Project, which is the only city-wide structure that works across Belfast and all its interfaces. We work in both communities. We are apolitical and non-aligned, and we have a membership made up of approximately 50 community organisations in the city.

176. I endorse what Sylvia and Peter have already said. We see ourselves, collectively and individually, as critical friends. We appreciate the opportunity to speak here today. We see the future of the work that we are trying to do. The partnership between the community sector that we represent and the politicians who are working in the Assembly is vital to the success of what we are trying to do.

177. We are also saying that we want to move up another gear. We want to step up the work that is already happening. We have touched on some of the very positive work that is not often seen, not often realised and certainly not often on our television screens or in the media. For example, this year and last year, we went through some pretty difficult times in the city because of different events that happened. In all that time, our work continued, although it did not always get the airtime. The work of the partnerships at interfaces continued, and people shook themselves down, got on with it and picked up the pieces when very difficult circumstances made that almost impossible.

178. We want to see a plan for change. However, if you were to speak to any of your constituents or to people who live at any of the interfaces in our city, or even regionally, and ask them whether they understand, see or know of the plan for change that needs to happen or whether they have a vision of a plan for that change that needs to happen, I doubt that they would be able to say yes. The people who live in those communities — in Belfast, there are 100 interface barriers — cannot say what they see as being a vision for change. That throws up the three key factors in how we move forward. First, there is the issue of policing and how that needs to happen in interface communities. The police would say that they are not in a position to deal with the problem entirely on their own. Secondly, the partnerships need to be encouraged, developed and resourced within the communities. Finally, and this is probably the most vital factor, trust needs to be encouraged within those communities.

179. I know that we are stuck for time, so I will finish on this point: the best way to move forward is through long-term, strategic, resourced intervention that will provide a wrap-around for communities. Take, for example, the work with young people that is needed to provide a vehicle forward. Can they be referred on to further education or employment opportunities? Can they be skilled in good citizenship? Can they be encouraged to change if they are involved or caught up in inter-community violence? The things that provide effective signage to other opportunities in those communities are probably the best ways in which to progress. I can go into that in some more detail later.

180. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I have a couple of follow-up questions, and I will then bring in Jacqueline. Joe, you talked about there being 50 organisations. What is the split between those representing one or other traditional community, those that are cross-community and those not representing either of our traditional communities?

181. **Mr O'Donnell**: The whole ethos of the Belfast Interface Project has been to include that process not only in our staff and on our board but in the membership of organisations. For both main cultural traditions, it is about 50:50. We have been in existence now for approximately 20 years. We were founded out of the CRC around 1995, and we became a stand-alone organisation in 2000. I have been director for only about four or five years. The previous director, Chris O'Halloran, has been there for 15 or 20 years. The integrity of the organisation

has always been to maintain that ethos. We have done that quite successfully.

182. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thanks. It was just for information.

183. Sylvia, you said that there was great frustration in the community about a lack of strategic vision coming out of Stormont. Does that mean that T:BUC is not the strategic vision?

184. **Ms Gordon**: We need to see things happening. We need to be able to point to stuff and say, "As a result of T:BUC, this is what we have been able to achieve". Therefore, T:BUC needs to be resourced, and it needs an implementation plan. It needs critical partners to allow its vision, aims and objectives to be achieved.

185. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If I were to ask what you think the budget is for T:BUC, what would you say?

186. **Ms Gordon**: Probably not enough.

187. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: But, in round figures, do you know what it is?

188. **Ms Gordon**: I do not know. It relies on Peace IV funding quite substantially.

189. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Although I was not here last week, as far as I understand from the briefing, it is reliant very much on —

190. **Mr Lyttle**: There is not one.

191. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: — monitoring rounds. There is no budget line, as such, for T:BUC.

192. Peter, you said that the fact that T:BUC is a devolved document is an achievement in itself. Perhaps that is not fully endorsed by what Sylvia said from her perspective.

193. **Mr Osborne**: I support everything that has been said so far. You have to give credit where it is due for how far we have come so far. I am talking about everybody in the Assembly and across all political parties.

194. The fact that OFMDFM achieved the production of the T:BUC document, and the fact that there are certain targets in it, such as the removal of the interface barriers, are achievements, and you have to recognise that. However, you then have to dig beneath that a little bit. You, Sylvia and Joe touched on aspects of that, too. How are you going to remove interface barriers? A strategy talks about how you are going to do something; it does not just set a target. You need to address certain critical issues. You need to ensure that, on both sides of an interface, people understand what interdependence is. They need to understand that, if they are to make progress in their area, that has to be done with each other across the community divide. Issues around safety and security have to be resolved. That means that people need to feel safer about the removal of the interface barriers. There has to be an inclusive process. That means that no gatekeepers and that everybody on both sides of the barriers is involved. There has to be political stability here, and that has to work its way out on to the ground so that people understand that a better vision for the future has been bought into by everybody across the political divide. There has to be relationship building across the barriers, and there has to be regeneration.

195. You need to achieve that with at least two very significant things coming into play: you need structures that are able to cut through and deliver on the ground, and you need resourcing.That will not be done without money. There are difficult times for us all around this, but, if we are serious about taking down interface barriers, it needs to be resourced. There needs to be significant long-term, outcome-focused resourcing. In that way — I come back to one other thing I said — the priority in government to achieve that needs to be higher than it is. Ultimately, it needs to be about making resources available.

196. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I want to bring Jacqueline in. Jacqueline, you have been a senior official in the CRC for a number of years. How and when did you hear about T:BUC?

197. **Ms Jacqueline Irwin (Community Relations Council)**: The review of the policy was in gestation for very many years. It depends on whether you say "united community" or the development of a strategy. It took a long time to come to fruition. I cannot even remember. There was probably talk about it when I first started in the organisation.

198. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What about the actual strategy Together: Building a United Community?

199. **Ms J Irwin**: In 2013, just prior to the announcements that the Secretary of State made, that was the moment at which we knew that there was going to be a policy, that it would be called united communities and that it had headline actions and so on.

200. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What was your gut reaction?

201. **Ms J Irwin**: At the time, two things struck me about the policy. One was that it lacked the cross-governmental component that had been described under what was then the existing shared future policy. At least it had an implementation plan. It viewed most of what was coming through from the remainder of the Programme for Government and so on as being part of what the delivery of a peaceful society would look like.

202. Its other big characteristic was that it recognised that it was going to need large-scale intervention, initiatives and programmes delivered out to young people across the range of categories in united communities at the moment. That was welcome. It seemed to be saying, "We've probably reached the end of the experimental peace-building and the small programmes and so on. We need something that is more collaborative, more large scale and a wholesale change across society." That was to be welcomed.

203. Your review is also to be welcomed. It is a very timely moment to draw breath because, in the conditions in which the policy came forward, more resources were available at that time. There was the possibility of additional resources; it seemed to be at least spoken about that there might have been at that stage. That is not where we are at now. The domestic financial situation is as difficult as you all know it is.

204. As for the international resources, there is a gap between Peace III and Peace IV. Peace III is coming to an end now, but Peace IV is probably at least a year and a half from delivery on the ground. It is possibly more; you might know better than I do about that. It is likely to be a smaller fund. As grateful as we all were to receive the American resources, they are not of the same order. The planning assumptions are different from what they were.

205. That means that, while the collaborative approach, which has been spoken about around the room, is still absolutely vital, we are finding that most of the groups on the ground are consumed with survival questions at the moment. To a certain extent, the public sector also is; it has had to turn its attention to decreasing budgets and trying to save what can be saved. We are in a very different place from where we were even a year and a half ago. All is not lost, however. This is a good opportunity to pay even more attention to the question of collaboration. We probably need to review what can be done now and what may need to be left for a little while longer; at least until we have more resources. I absolutely agree with what Sylvia said: the vision of united communities has not communicated itself to people in their ordinary, everyday lives. That is where we will measure its success. Has it made a difference to somebody's life in the ordinary, everyday world? I do not think that they fully understand.

206. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I would like to explore the idea of collaborative working and how we allocate resources and how that impacts on the ability to collaborate. That works at two levels: you have the need for Departments to collaborate if we are going to deliver on Together: Building a United Community, because OFMDFM really

only leads on United Youth. The rest are providing a vision, a collaborative role or a coordinating role — whatever way you want to describe that. So, there is a piece for us in the Executive and Assembly to ensure that, rather than working in our vertical silos, we deliver horizontal government.

207. On the ground, Sylvia and Joe, there is an expectation that your organisations will all work collaboratively. Basically, we allocate funding on a competitive basis. How can you share best practice when you are a brother-and-sister organisation one day but then are competing for increasingly diminishing resources the next?

208. **Mr O'Donnell**: That is where we become partners in terms of government and the community together. We have shown some very good examples of how we can do that in interface communities. For example, we have, in partnership with the CRC, set up the Interface Community Partners. We are also represented on the inter-agency group here at the Assembly, which is a cross-departmental group. We are involved in those two projects to simplify the process of barrier removal, or certainly to work in partnership.

209. Belfast Interface Project recently set up eight cluster partnerships across the city. We have broken down Belfast into 13 clusters, which are areas where peace walls or barriers cluster together. The only caveat in each of those partnerships is that they are on a cross-community basis and that the action plan that will come out of them will be agreed through a cross-community process. We feel that that is the best way to do it.

210. You are absolutely right: currently, organisations like ours are being forced to compete for quite small pots of funding. Smaller community-based organisations are going into survival mode; they say, "Look, I need to think about my own community before I think about working on a cross-community basis, and I think, to try and survive, I want to compete for that pot of money." Collectively, we can come up with a better strategy than that.

211. **Ms Gordon**: A lot of organisations are now taking strategic pauses to look at where they are at and how they go forward. There is less funding, and it is more competitive. How do you react to that? I concur with Joe: it is about collaboration. It is about the sum of the total good out there; the sum of what, for example, Groundwork can bring in its skills and experience, and how I can collaborate with Joe and the Belfast Interface Project. It has to be about the aims and vision of any organisation. As I said, in my organisation, it is not about the people first; it is about the aims and objectives, and where we want to get to as an organisation. If we are committed to peace-building, which we are, and regeneration, we have to put the strategic vision forward, rather than being busy, busy, busy looking for the next small pot of funding. If you are doing that, I am frantically busy; I am taking my eye off the ball when I could be doing other stuff much more effectively.

212. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: At the risk of jumping on one of my little hobby horses, you would get funding only if you prove that there is a need that the Department or Executive accept needs to be addressed. It is probably a need that they believe can be measured and your intervention monitored. In that case, having ticked all the boxes, why is it limited to a year, or whatever? Why do we not say that it will be open-ended support, in the same way as we commit to open-ended support for the National Health Service? That would mean that the exact budget varies, but the commitment is going to be there until the need is met. That would take away the competitive nature of it, or a large degree of it, and it might open up the sharing of best practice, which, understandably, is difficult in a situation where you are looking at somebody and going, "Well, if I tell you, you could take the money off me next April".

213. **Ms Gordon**: Or, "What's your big idea? I'll copy that." It is very competitive. The

sector has to step up to the mark in terms of the voluntary and community sector. We recognise that we need to do things differently and work differently.

214. **Mr O'Donnell**: Not only is that a good idea, but, to make it even better in terms of accountability, good governance and management, it could be reviewed on a two- or three-yearly basis. So, you could be open-ended funded but be subject to reviews.

215. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes, continuous monitoring and targets.

216. **Mr O'Donnell**: That could be the way forward.

217. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Then, if there was ever a feeling that the need was going to be met — in other words, that you had succeeded — you would give notice of three, six or nine months that the funding is to come to an end. That also means that you can retain staff and not have them worrying every year about whether the funding is coming to keep them. I am sure you lose a lot of staff to the statutory sector because people are fearful about whether they will get a second contract.

218. **Mr Osborne**: As I go around and talk to groups, I am genuinely amazed by the commitment of people who do this work. By and large, the people who do it could be paid better and have different job satisfaction if they went off and did something else. However, they keep at it, and they do so because of the commitment they have to the needs in the area. Many of them have been doing this for decades, sometimes in a voluntary capacity, and have been doing an awful lot of great stuff on the ground, sometimes at personal risk. So, I agree with what has been said, but the funding and chasing of the jobs is one aspect of a great number of people who are putting a huge amount of personal sacrifice into what they do; it is not all about money and it is not all about funding.

219. There is also a significant degree of sharing. The projects that CRC funds are brought together quarterly, and there is a huge amount of sharing between the organisations that are doing that work on the ground. That is done with willingness and in a way that enhances the work that each of those organisations does. It is quite impressive, and the Committee is very welcome to come to some of those sharing meetings to hear about the work that is happening with those funded projects.

220. There is an issue: there is an awful lot of work going on with a lot of different funders. There is something on a regional basis about the coordination of that work: we can do what we do with our funded projects, but we cannot do it with everybody else.

221. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your presentation so far. What involvement has the Community Relations Council had with the ministerial panel and the project board that was established to oversee the implementation of Together: Building a United Community?

222. **Ms J Irwin**: None.

223. **Mr Lyttle**: So, you do not know what the activity of the ministerial panel has been since the publication of the strategy.

224. **Ms J Irwin**: I understand that it has met and that it did so relatively recently but nothing else.

225. **Mr Lyttle**: There could be any degree of communication between each Department on that. Given that you have said that there is a real reach for cross-departmental cooperation on the strategy, that is a bit of a concern.

226. **Ms J Irwin**: One of the things that I suggested to officials in the Department, to address the question of building solidarity with the policy at the community level, was the wide circulation of communiqués that came out of those meetings so that people can see that there is work going on. There is work going on behind the scenes, but the general public are relatively unaware of that. That sort of communication would be very helpful.

227. **Mr Lyttle**: Given the importance of investment and resources to the delivery of the strategy, what input and feedback have you had on the review of good relations funding?

228. **Ms J Irwin**: We had a meeting with officials earlier this week. They are not quite clear yet on the handling of the report and how that will be dealt with. In general terms, the discussion with us related to activities that they wish to see us taking forward in the next year or so. I am aware of that, and I am aware that the report has been received and that Ministers are considering it.

229. **Mr Lyttle**: Is there an identified timescale for publication of the report?

230. **Ms J Irwin**: I am not sure whether that has been decided. Officials would be better able to speak to you about that.

231. **Mr Lyttle**: How important is the measurement of outcomes? How effective have the good relations indicators been in monitoring and measuring progress of Together: Building a United Community? Are the indicators that have been proposed adequately linked to the Together: Building a United Community objectives?

232. **Ms J Irwin**: I think that everybody accepts that the indicators that are there at the moment are probably making the best of what is available and that they fall short of making a very clear and causal relationship between the information that is gathered and the impact of the implementation of the policy. So, there is work to be done.

233. I am also very aware of the fact that, across government, there is a greater interest in measuring outcomes as a means of being clearer about accountability and therefore focussing on the right things. That is one of the things that the Department has spoken to our organisation about.

234. To join the question of measuring impact with the question of what services should be delivered, the other ingredient in there is collaborative planning. So, we have an opportunity coming up in community planning processes, if we can get that right, to begin to take a much more collaborative approach, not only to assessing how far we have got and what the needs are in the local community but, very importantly, what the assets are and what is already there that could have more advantage squeezed out of it, particularly in relation to community and good relations issues, which is our area of interest. If we can get that right and get those who are bringing funding into that environment to also join up their thinking a little bit, we have a better chance of getting to the sort of vision that you are speaking of: a plan that is longer, has other contributing to it and has its outcomes measured in the round. Each contribution that has been made by my organisation or any other should be done in a rounded way that takes all into account. That is a good idea on any day, but it is an essential idea when we are moving forward with limited resources.

235. **Mr Lyttle**: Collaborative planning is best practice in most approaches. It is not encouraging to hear that the body charged with collaborative planning — the ministerial panel — has communicated with you in no great way. There was also to be a funders' body created in the delivery of Together: Building a United Community. Have you had any update on that?

236. **Ms J Irwin**: That group has met twice.

237. **Mr Lyttle**: Do you know who that group includes?

238. **Ms J Irwin**: It includes my organisation, some of the independent funders, such as Atlantic Philanthropies, the Community Foundation, the Special EU Programmes Body, departmental officials and organisations like the National Lottery.

239. **Mr Lyttle**: Presuming that you submitted proposals for the good relations indicators, have you had any feedback as to whether you suggestions have been adopted?

240. **Ms J Irwin**: Not specifically in relation to our suggestions, but the discussion has

certainly started in relation to everyone improving their approach to outcomes-based accountability. That may take us somewhere else in sorts of things that we measure. That is not quite an answer to your specific question about Together: Building a United Community, but, as the resources that are specifically focussed on good relations diminish, making sure that all the resources spent by Government have a benefit in terms of good relations will be an important achievement.

241. **Mr Lyttle**: I have a quick question for Sylvia about interfaces. You mention that there is a need for public, private and third-sector collaboration and investment in regeneration around interfaces. OFMDFM recently announced the identification of two urban villages: on the Newtownards Road and at Colin. What type of interaction did OFMDFM have with groundwork in relation to the identification of those areas? Have you any information on how other areas may be able to be part of any other regeneration projects?

242. **Ms Gordon**: I did not have any direct communication with OFMDFM. I had conversations with the Strategic Investment Board. I am aware of the new town centre for Colin and have had a number of conversations with the Strategic Investment Board about how organisations such as Groundwork can benefit from social clauses in procurement, particularly in relation to large-scale regeneration programmes. I am aware of one meeting in relation to the Newtownards Road. Again, I know that that was communication from the Strategic Investment Board not OFMDFM.

243. **Mr Lyttle**: How does that type of regeneration facilitate cross-community relationship building?

244. **Ms Gordon**: It is quite difficult. If you take the new town centre for Colin in west Belfast, it is about looking at practice and assets that are already there. There are projects in that area that have a cross-community basis. Therefore, any regeneration should take into consideration those services, how they are enhanced and made better and how the diversity of the people accessing those services is increased. I could give you one very basic example of a project in Colin Glen. It is a huge allotment site on an old Invest NI site. The diversity of the people using that site is remarkable. It is cross-community and crosses all social structures as well. People with disabilities, people with learning difficulties, homeless people and indeed people from the new communities that are coming into Northern Ireland are accessing the site as well. So, in many respects, there is diversity. You have to look for those gems. They should be valued and brought into the bigger debate about regeneration. How does that project that is based on the Glen Road communicate and join with the vision for a new town centre for Colin? How does it actually connect with that?

245. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is the Department asking you about that? Is it listening if you attempt to describe that?

246. **Ms Gordon**: I have described the plans to the Department, particularly around the site off the Glen Road. It has talked about how it appreciates the diversity of the users, the beneficiaries and the need for it to connect with the new town centre for Colin. It is pretty difficult when it actually comes down to implementation and, for example, when SIB has appointed an urban-regeneration company. So, it is up to Groundwork as well as others to step up to the mark and have that conversation with that urban-regeneration company about how we can actually make connections.

247. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I just want to be sure that I am hearing what you are saying, because you have talked about your contact as being more with the Strategic Investment Board.

248. **Ms Gordon**: It has been more with the Strategic Investment Board, yes.

249. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is that the way that you would like it to be?

250. **Ms Gordon**: I would like to take my vision and sell it to OFMDFM.

251. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you.

252. **Mr D McIlveen**: Thank you for your presentation. I am in complete agreement with a lot of what I am hearing, but I suppose that what I want to encourage you to do for a minute or two is to come to this side of the table, metaphorically. *[Laughter.]*

253. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am sorry: I cannot agree.

254. **Mr D McIlveen**: Joe had mentioned, very rightly, I think, that obviously the sort of long-term or, hopefully, even medium-term objective is effectively to get these communities to a place where they are standing on their own two feet, are able to get into further education and that jobs are then available as a result of that. Peter, very articulately, related that to how everything that they seek to do in the Community Relations Council is based on outcomes rather than outputs. I think that that is a really pragmatic, beneficial way to do things.

255. However, it may be the case that we are in a position where it is a choice of "or" rather than "and". My understanding is that, in some easements that may come as a result of the budgetary consultation, the choice will probably be to give some extra money to the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) on the basis that it suggests that it may have to cut significant places in further and higher education or not to give it to DEL and to put it somewhere else. I would appreciate your thoughts if you were in that position. You can see the garden: the money tree is not there. We are not hiding it away anywhere. We have what we have as far as the Budget is concerned. Where that very difficult choice is placed in front of us, as elected representatives we have to try to make the right decision when it comes to how that money can be spent. If your vision is an outcome-based approach to this, where jobs are created and educational opportunities are there to be had, where do you see the priority in that regard? I keep highlighting this point: we do not have a choice of both; it is one or the other.

256. **Mr O'Donnell**: One of the most disappointing things I have heard at this meeting is the fact that there is no money in T:BUC. I do not think that people out there in greater society realise that. They think that there is a budget that they believe is significant and available. This will come as a very big shock to quite a lot of organisations and communities out there.

257. I understand the point you make very clearly; that it is an either/or situation. Without directly putting the question back to you, I would say that if you look at the interface areas that we are talking about in Belfast in particular — I will speak on this and Peter might want to take a broader view of what we are talking about — you will see that they have been interface areas in our city for over 50 years; the same areas, the same communities. We have not been able to change them. We have not planned at any stage to change them. They are still in existence. They are also the same areas that are in the top 10 areas of multiple deprivation, and have been over the same period of time and maybe longer. They are also the running sore of the — hopefully — past conflict that we have unfortunately had to live through and which some might, quite rightly, argue were the origin of it.

258. If we are tasked with creating that change and taking on that challenge, and if we are really serious about moving our society forward, then that is a very big decision we have to make. Can we afford to do both? You are making the point that we cannot. Can we afford to change society for the future and for the better, improve it and perhaps fulfil the other side, as you said, by bringing in new ways of creating employment, opportunities and change? When I talk about interfaces and ask people whether they want the wall up or down, quite often, that is not the right question to put to them. It should be whether they want the wall up or whether

they would consider something else as a better alternative. I think that we need to offer people the better alternative.

259. **Mr Osborne**: Can I comment as well? First of all, respectfully, David, I do not accept the premise of the question: I do not believe that this is an either/or situation. If you are asking whether we should invest in job creation or reconciliation and peace-building work, I think the answer is that we should, obviously, do both. The issue is the priority we give each of them. It is not either/or: it is about the priority or proportion of investment we give to each of them.

260. I apologise if I have said this to the Committee, but I do not think that I have. An example comes to my mind. I have spoken about it before, but not here, I think. Two years ago, quite rightly, £60 million of public investment was put into the Titanic building in Belfast. I have no issue with that. It would take the Community Relations Council 30 years to make that same investment in giving out awards to community organisations like Joe's and Sylvia's and the many other dozens of organisations that the CRC supports. So, that was one investment of £60 million. It would take us 30 years to match that amount of investment.

261. Now, there is some other investment, absolutely, in peace-building work. Even when you take the Peace money and you spend different sections of it over seven or eight years for Peace IV and the different aspects of that strategy, it is not actually a significant amount of money. Looking at interfaces or some of the other areas that it will work in, we see that it will be substantially less than that one piece of investment in the Titanic building. That building is very important and successful. But, the issue is this: if we do not invest properly in peace building and reconciliation, emotionally as well as in monetary terms, then in 30 years' time, there will be a lot fewer visitors to the Titanic building than there are now, because the children of the people who visit now will not come to Belfast to visit it then.

262. We run the risk of recreating the conditions that will create violence and the sort of divisions that we have seen in this society in the past. We have to reprioritise our understanding of why it is important to invest in reconciliation work. What we are doing at the minute is not investing enough in it. We need to understand the cost of not investing in it. That cost will be a future that none of us wants.

263. Take that part of town, at Laganside, 20 or 30 years ago. You are probably not old enough to remember what it was like. I do, and I know that Mike is old enough to remember it, anyway.

264. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Please — this is being recorded by Hansard. *[Laughter.]*

265. **Mr Osborne**: It was full of coal yards. In many ways, it was an unpleasant place to be. The amount of work going on in it was less than it was in the 1950s and 1960s. Government said, "Right, we are now going to sort this problem out. We are going to create structures, and we're going to put investment in. We're going to cut through the red tape, and we're going to make sure that people can deliver in this area". We now have one of the most successful regeneration models in that part of Belfast compared to anywhere else in Europe and even many parts of the world. That was a determination by, and priority for, government to do it. That is what happened at that point. We need to do the same thing with reconciliation. If we do not get the balance right, we are storing up problems for the future.

266. **Mr D McIlveen**: I was talking about the next fifteen-and-a-half-month budgetary period, which, really, is all we can plan for at the moment. I was not talking about broader expense or the cost of investment.

267. I do not mean for this to come across facetiously or anything, Peter, but from what you are telling us, we, effectively, are at ransom: if we do not invest in peace building for the future, violence will return to the streets. On the basis of

a quarter of a century of the Community Relations Council being in existence, do you think that the outcome of the Community Relations Council has been effective enough if we still find ourselves in that position, 25 years after it was founded?

268. **Mr Osborne**: I will comment briefly, and I will then hand over to colleagues to comment; I do not want to hog all of this part of the conversation.

269. I do not think that I am saying anything around holding to ransom. It is a debate that we need to have in the public square. It is a debate that there has been for decades now, through the peace process and before it. There is a logic in that debate that people need to come to and answer for themselves. Peace building, reconciliation and good relations work is the work of every political party and everybody around the table. We all invest in it, and we all should be investing in it. We will all come to our separate conclusions about what priority that should have compared with other things.

270. You will understand what my priority is and what, I suspect, colleagues' priorities are, and those of the others around the table as well. It is an individual thing. It is not about holding to ransom; it is about how we interpret and implement public policy around this.

271. The £2 million a year that the CRC invests in community organisations to deliver that work, and the £2·5 million a year in the central good relations fund is, in the context of other spend here, a pretty paltry amount of money. We need to look seriously at how that investment can deliver long-term outcomes. When funding is delivered in an ad hoc, piecemeal and short-term way, you cannot talk about long-term outcomes that deal with the complexity of the issues we are dealing with. It just is not possible. We need to shift how we think about resourcing this work.

272. Is the 25 years of the CRC value for money? I think that that was the breadth of your question. From the 12 months I have been involved with it, I conclude that it absolutely is. For the amount of funding and resource the CRC has received over those 25 years, and given the complexities of the problems that it and other people have faced, the public purse has got huge value for money out of what the CRC has delivered. Although I am happy to be judged on what is being delivered and the change that has taken place, you also need to judge this on what might have happened if the CRC had not been doing what it has been doing for so long.

273. Sylvia and Joe talked about the challenge for the voluntary and community sector. There is also a challenge for the CRC, as an arm's-length body, to do what it does better than it does at the moment and to take us into a different place as we develop and deepen the peace process. In order to do that, we need the support of government in terms of not just money but structures and the inspiration that government and others provide to the peace process.

274. **Mr D McIlveen**: Sylvia, I mean this in the nicest possible way: I feel terribly sorry for the people in community associations I work with in my constituency, who spend most of their working weeks talking to civil servants and having to fill in forms. They have developed the kind of lingo and speak required to fill in forms. I have heard a lot of statements today like "lack of strategic vision", "corporate governance" and "social clauses in procurement". I understand all that, but I need to hear real everyday speak. The biggest challenge you threw at our door — and you were very right to throw that challenge to us — was the fact that people are opening the newspapers and are saying that this place is just not working for them. Will you elaborate and be a little bit more specific? At a high level, I get that criticism. I know that it is out there; we discuss it day and daily with people in our constituencies. What, specifically, are the issues and challenges for the people you are engaging with? How are the lives of the

people you are dealing with worse today than they were five years ago?

275. **Ms Gordon**: People are worried about putting food on the table; they are worried about paying bills and they are worried about paying their rent or mortgage. They see the cuts coming. They have heard about the cuts. They feel the cuts. They know that change is out there, and some people manage change more effectively than others. People are concerned about livelihoods. They are concerned about their family. They are concerned about their family's prospects, particularly those of their children and grandchildren.

276. When people voted yes in the referendum and signed up to the process, they believed that things would get better. I am worried that they and I do not necessarily see or feel that. They are quite stressed about that fact. I opened the 'Belfast Telegraph' last week, and the whole middle spread was about cuts to Health, Environment and the public sector. We need to build the private sector, but that needs me to spend my money; it needs me to go into town and shop. This can become very personal to me when you ask me that question, because it is about being fit to provide for your family and give them a decent standard of living in a peaceful and stable society, and with a Government who are stable, connect with their people and understand their people.

277. **Mr D McIlveen**: It is really helpful to hear that as you said it. One of my greatest frustrations in the work we do — and I think the media feed this to a large extent — is that there is a them-and-us mentality. That ignores the fact that I live in my constituency, go to church in my constituency and send my kids to school in my constituency. Those are the things I do. I am not detached from where I live; I am part of where I live, and I hope that I have as much interest in ensuring that this place moves forward as anyone else.

278. I understand that people are worried. My parents were worried about us when we were kids. I am worried for my family as they are growing up. However, I keep bringing it back to real terms. Obviously, there has been an undertaking by the Government that, to their best possible ability, front-line services will not be very adversely affected by the cutbacks that we are now having to make. There will be a voluntary exit scheme that will be launched in the Civil Service; it will not be a matter of mass redundancies or anything like that.

279. Where is the breakdown in the message? I am not sitting here with my head in the sand. We know that there are challenges ahead; we absolutely get that. I need to be convinced that the hurt that people feel is not manufactured in any way and is a real hurt. Once we realise where the specific targeted needs are, we, as a Government, can do something about it, but we cannot do anything with generalisations about us all being rubbish.We have to know exactly where to target. I am not sure that that always feeds back into the —

280. **Ms Gordon**: We need to communicate better. The media have an awful lot of responsibility in creating that feeling in people. If you are under stress, you are more vulnerable to other stresses, which can come in any shape or fashion. We hear and see all these stories, but it is important that a balance is brought to this. It is important that facts and evidence are provided to counter some of the stories that we are hearing about the impact; the impact; the impact. The communication strategy needs to be right.

281. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is not just the media, Sylvia. Joe said today that he was shocked and surprised to hear us say that there is no budget line for T:BUC. Equally, I am surprised that you, Joe, have not been made aware of that before today. I would have thought that somebody in your position needed to be aware of that. Jacqueline said, in answer to the Deputy Chair, that she is not aware of what is happening at the ministerial subgroup. Somebody in your position should be more than aware of it, so we have a bit of a challenge.

282. I do not want to foreclose this, but an hour is up and we have a long agenda.

283. **Mr D McIlveen**: I appreciate your latitude, Chair.

284. **Mr O'Donnell**: Can I make one final comment?

285. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I have another question for you, Joe, but go ahead.

286. **Mr O'Donnell**: It is on the basis of how people feel and their responses, particularly those living in interface areas. There is currently quite a bit of research is going on — some of you are probably aware of it — in the University of Ulster. It is being conducted by Duncan Morrow, Jonny Byrne and some of their colleagues. They are working on statistics around interface areas and how those feed into some of the challenges we face.

287. At this stage, I say with some considerable confidence that life expectancy is 10 years shorter if you live in an interface community. You are more liable to be open to influence by legal and illegal drugs, alcohol dependency, family breakup, difficulties in the family unit, lack of employment, lack of education and lack of opportunity. All those aspects in those areas are considerably focused by the current economic strife we are feeling and the austerity measures that are kicking in. They do not make it a pleasant situation.

288. A lot of people do not realise that, quite often, interface areas are the site of violence but not the source of violence. The source of violence quite often comes from outside interface areas.

289. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Joe, you said earlier that we have had decades of conflict and division, and decades where the same areas are the ones of multiple deprivation. That league table has not really changed, although money, funding and resource has been put into it. Are we just not doing enough of what we are doing, or are we doing the wrong thing? If so, is T:BUC the answer?

290. **Mr O'Donnell**: To be quite honest, I am not sure whether T:BUC is the answer given some of the conversations we have had today. However, I would like to think that it is part of the answer, the solution and the process. We need a serious cross-departmental focus on these areas. With the greatest respect to the Department of Education, OFMDFM and DSD, I do not think that they can solve the problems, and I do not think that the individual parties can do so either. We really need to see change created by joined-up government, cross-party support and cross-departmental planning.

291. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: And also, surely, by listening to people on the ground.

292. **Mr O'Donnell**: Of course.

293. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do people agree that there is best practice in tackling sectarianism, division and poor relations?

294. **Ms J Irwin**: Yes. We all agree that there is improving practice. Someone asked earlier whether there is collaboration across the groups, even though the funding creates a divisive model. An awful lot of collaboration goes on, and there is a great deal of interest in improving practice. There is a big appetite, despite the fact that it might mean that some groups or structures disappear, to look for a better way of getting things done.

295. **Mr Lyttle**: I do not normally play the role of defending OFMDFM or anybody else, but there is obviously money for shared education, the United Youth programme and urban villages. The problem appears to be that there is no OFMDFM baseline budget or no resource-targeted action plan so that this Committee and people in the civic sector can, in a coordinated way, identify exactly how that spend is being coordinated and make sense of it.

296. I disassociate myself from the question about the need to be convinced that people in the community think that there are problems with regards to the delivery of the Northern Ireland Executive,

particularly on this issue. The issues that Joe raised need to be tackled.

297. How important is tackling paramilitarism to building a united community? What do you think the T:BUC strategy is doing or could do in relation to that issue?

298. **Mr O'Donnell**: Quite clearly, in interface areas, for example, we are looking at clear signs now — and this is informed by some of the policing reports — that young people in republican areas can be drawn to dissident republican activity. The same thing can happen quite easily with loyalist paramilitaries in the Protestant/unionist/loyalist (PUL) community. We need to be aware of that. I am not saying that it cannot be overcome. I think that we all want to be part of the process and the solution, but let us be honest: it is there. Its potential to increase is there as well.

299. **Ms Gordon**: This is compounded when people and a community feel vulnerable. Exploitation and radicalisation can happen.

300. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: One of the challenges we are having in giving shape to the inquiry is the huge number of individuals, groups and communities who are impacted by and involved in all this, so we took a look at who the CRC has funded down the years. It is extremely diverse in all sorts of measures, including the amount of money that you fund groups for. This is a serious question, because it leapt off the page at us — and you might need to get back to us, because I do not necessarily think that you will know the answer — but you once funded a group called Leadership in a Diverse Society. The narrative is as follows:

"a project with 13 young people from all parts of Belfast".

301. It ran for eight months and looked at cultural diversity. The amount of money you gave it was £62·93. That fascinates us. That may be the best £62·93 that has ever been spent.

302. **Ms Gordon**: That might be value for money.

303. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If you are not aware of it —

304. **Ms J Irwin**: I am not.

305. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We are just fascinated.

306. **Ms J Irwin**: I will hazard a guess at what it might be. That may not have been the level of the award that was made; it may have been what the group ended up spending. Sometimes, for a range of reasons, groups never get to expend all they intend to. For very small groups especially, it could be that someone disappeared off the agenda for some family reason, and the work was never completed. I do not know, but we will look at it.

307. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If you can take 13 people over eight months and it costs that little —

308. **Ms J Irwin**: That will be what the original application would have been for, but I will certainly look into the actual expenditure. That is baffling.

309. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That was the spend in the annual report.

310. **Mr Osborne**: Can I take that question as an opportunity to say two other things? I have no idea what that project is, either. It is quite clear, from looking at some of the projects that are funded, that a lot of activity is going on for not a lot of money. It may not be £62·93; it might be more than that. A lot of people work in this area because they are really committed to it. They will deliver, for a few thousand pounds here or there, much more in value than is very often delivered in other sectors or sections of the community. How much more transformative would it be to put that resourcing into a more significant long-term context, where you can be outcome-focused? That is where the sector needs to go in what it delivers.

311. The second point is to give the Committee an invitation. The CRC would be happy to organise an evidence day or two with the organisations on the ground for the Committee to come out and

meet the groups. I know that you do that individually —

312. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is something that we are doing as part of this inquiry.

313. Peter, Jacqueline, Joe and Sylvia, thank you very much indeed. I am sure that we could have gone on for hours.

314. **Mr Osborne**: We are happy to come back if you want.

315. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It has been valuable for us. Thank you very much.

14 January 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Mrs Sarah McWilliams	*Juniper Consulting*
Professor Colin Knox	*University of Ulster*

316. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Colin and Sarah, you are very welcome. Thank you for coming along. You are the first witnesses to give oral evidence to our inquiry, so we feel that we are taking a big step forward. I invite you to make some short opening observations.

317. **Mrs Sarah McWilliams (Juniper Consulting)**: Thank you, Chair and Committee members. Good afternoon and thank you for the invitation to provide oral evidence. We will keep our opening remarks brief, but we wish to give you a short overview of the programme and then to focus on some of the high-level outcomes from the evaluation and some transferable principles or learning.

318. To recap, the programme was launched in March 2011 and was jointly funded by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies. The budget was £4 million. Its key aim is to promote and improve relations between and across disadvantaged communities. To apply, projects needed involvement of at least one community organisation at each side of the interface and to be in the top 20% of the most deprived wards in Northern Ireland. There are four areas of focus: early years and parenting; shared space via schools; youth engagement; and shared neighbourhoods. Nine projects were funded across Northern Ireland, in urban and rural areas, and there are two phases. The first phase ended in June last year and the second phase will end in March this year.

319. I will move on to the outcomes. We are going to focus at a high level on six of the key outcomes. The first one is around strengthened relationships and engagement at a personal level, a professional level and a cross-community level. By that, we mean stronger and committed working relationships in which there is trust and sharing. Engagement that may have started out with some reluctance has now developed to a point at which there is a strong desire for participants to engage and a strong growth in the number of people engaging. The second area is around improved quality of outcomes. The programme started with broad outcomes of improving relationships between communities and encouraging reconciliation, but it is now much more than that, and much wider, and we have seen evidence of outcomes for well-being, such as improved confidence, overcoming fears and anxiety, tackling social isolation among vulnerable people and active engagement in communities.

320. The third area is around improved educational and skills outcomes, be they for children, young people, schools or parents. The fourth area is around improved access to services. In addition to the services that the projects themselves provide, they also connect participants to other services in the community, such as parenting services, health services, youth services and access to further courses in education.

321. There is also a greater movement across and through areas of contested space. Where there might have been an initial apprehension, that has changed to a much greater and freer

movement across the areas that the projects are in, be they in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Portadown, Bessbrook, Newtownstewart or Ballymena.

322. Finally, new shared spaces have been created. The 50:50 basis of the programme has encouraged projects to find shared spaces for their activities, and we are now seeing an increase in, and multiple examples of, new shared spaces, be they a town hall, a youth club, a school or a community centre.

323. I also want to touch on the second area, which is transferable principles or learning. We have found that uniting people and communities on common, shared issues rather than through a direct, head-on good-relations approach, has been very effective in building relationships between communities. By shared issues, we mean things such as education, parenting, childcare, bullying, drugs and alcohol. As research has shown, communities at interfaces are some of the most deprived in Northern Ireland. Good relations and deprivation are interlinked and cannot be addressed in isolation. Therefore, the goal should be to improve quality of life and break the multigenerational cycle of deprivation.

324. We found that the most effective models of working have been in those projects that have engaged and built up relationships with a wide variety of participants, such as children, their parents, teachers, statutory organisations and community groups, thereby securing maximum buy-in and impact. Related to that, we believe that collaboration is important. Projects that have managed to engage successfully and effectively the statutory, community and voluntary sectors to support their work are delivering good outcomes for participants in the communities. Finally, rather than just sustaining the projects in the programme, we believe that we need to identify how to sustain the learning from the ideas, concepts and good models of practice in the programme and transfer those to other areas.

325. To sum up, the projects that are funded through the contested spaces programme are demonstrating very good outcomes for participants and the areas where they operate. We believe that there is learning and ways of working from the programme that can be transferred and used elsewhere. In saying that, there have, of course, been challenges and obstacles to overcome. However, project participants have adapted their approaches and learned from their experiences.

326. Finally, we hope that the continuing implementation of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) can reflect the experiences of the contesting spaces programme in some way, particularly through its good practice and effective ways of supporting communities.

327. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. Thank you very much. Would it be fair to say that your analysis of contested spaces is that there is no need to reinvent the wheel as we look at how we deliver T:BUC?

328. **Professor Colin Knox (University of Ulster)**: Yes. I suppose that one of the things that surprised us a little bit about the lead-in to T:BUC was the focus on running pilots. The United Youth programme in T:BUC started off with a very traditional model of needing to do pilots, but one of the questions that we have asked is why it needs to do pilots if a programme is already being funded that has essentially done some of that work to test out some of those ideas. That is probably a very traditional approach to new initiatives, but some of the things are not new. I am not suggesting for one moment that all the learning is contained within that programme. However, there are many good examples out there of youth programmes, so my point is this: why would you spend £1 million doing a pilot for a youth programme? That is just one example.

329. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. Can I drill down to how reluctance was turned

into a strong desire to participate? Are there key elements that come through?

330. **Professor Knox**: One of the most successful things that we experienced was that this was not seen as, if you like, an upfront community relations or good relations programme. In other words, the programmes that we found to be most effective were those that identified a common need across both sides of the interface rather than those that saw this as a programme that was overtly about good relations or community relations. At interface areas, the social problems are the same, and it is really about identifying what the common social and economic issues are and whether you can tackle those in a way in which both communities benefit and, in a sense, the traditional boundaries become much more porous. Therefore, it is not about saying that we are going in here to make Catholics more Protestant or Protestants more Catholic. Rather, it is to say this: what are, as psychologists call them, the superordinate goals here? What are the things that overarch both those communities? Get that understanding, and, as a consequence, good relations and reconciliation effects follow suit. It is a much more organic way of dealing with it.

331. For instance, we supported a project for two schools on the Limestone Road. Both schools identified themselves as suffering because of poor parenting skills. That was a common issue, and some of the interventions were around helping those parents to help their children to read, to get some routine into their life, and so on. Those are skills that organisations that have some expertise in that area could bring to parents. The benefit of that was that parents were in these sessions to become better parents, if you like. They were not there because one was from side of the Limestone Road and the other was from the other. As a consequence, they started to trust each other, saw that they had similar kinds of problems and were there together to learn how to deal with those problems. That broke down personal perceptions, and we found that to be a way of establishing trust.

332. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is most interesting. You are not going in saying to the people on the left-hand side of the wall that they have to work with the people on the right-hand side of the wall. You are saying, "You have an issue. Did you know that they have the very same issue?". Why would that motivate me if I were sitting on the left-hand side of the wall with poor parenting skills? How do you convince me of the benefit?

333. **Professor Knox**: The motivation is that all parents want a better experience for their child, and that is a common issue. If you want a better education for your child, you will say, "Perhaps I could get that if I had some skills that would improve my parenting". The issue is not one of, "I am better than you or you are better than me" or, "I want to be motivated to go to one side of the interface". It is simply to say that we have knowledge that we have expressed through our own schools. One was Currie Primary School and the other was Holy Family Primary School. They identified in their own school environment that they could do things to help their children. The common superordinate goal was that they wanted to have a better life for their children and wanted them to be better educated.

334. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is there an element of strength in numbers?

335. **Professor Knox**: Yes, absolutely.

336. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. How important is leadership? I get a sense that these programmes, when they succeed, sometimes succeed because there is an individual who is absolutely core as a driver of the initiative.

337. **Mrs McWilliams**: I think that the projects have had good leadership, but I think that where they succeeded was in the partnership approach that we talked about. With that approach, the projects have drawn in the schools, community organisations, the police and health

providers. They have kind of drawn in all the resources from the community around them. OK, there is leadership, but there is also partnership-working. That, I suppose, creates ownership as well and is very effective, rather than having just one person lead it. However, it does take good leadership as well.

338. **Professor Knox**: To add to Sarah's explanation, I think that that is particularly true in schools. If you are working on a schools project and do not have strong leadership from principals there, it can fall off at the edges a bit, particularly if things start to go a bit wobbly for them when they get a bad experience. For instance, in one project, schools had come together to work together, and there was an incident between pupils. It was an isolated incident, but had the principals not been strong in the circumstances they could well have said, "Look, my life would be easier if we didn't have this kind of work". Therefore, it is absolutely crucial, particularly — I do not say this in a negative way — in a school environment, which is perhaps more hierarchical than other organisations, in that they get leadership from the top.

339. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have programmes that can be effectively used as a template but that will work only if you have strong on-the-ground leadership prepared to look after the bad days as well as the good ones.

340. **Professor Knox**: Yes, absolutely.

341. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is there any big difference between rural and urban schools?

342. **Professor Knox**: I will uses as specific examples a project that worked in east Belfast and one that worked in Newtownstewart. The geography of east Belfast is such that proximity meant that interfaces were very visible, and so on, whereas in rural areas they were almost invisible, but, nonetheless, everybody knew where they were. The other thing that we found, just by dint of working in rural areas, particularly rural schools, is that they really appreciated any extra resources, because they tended to be operating on a shoestring, particularly small primary schools with limited financial resources. Therefore, they were always very welcoming of any kind of intervention at the start. They saw that it was at least worth doing and were more than happy to participate.

343. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: More so than urban schools?

344. **Professor Knox**: I would not say more so, but our sense, certainly on that particular project, was that some urban schools might have had more access to resources than rural schools by dint of the geography and the distance between schools. At a parental level, a lot of the good models that we saw had buy-in from parents. There is a sense of community in rural areas. If it is a farming community, perhaps farmers are lending one another machinery and that kind of thing. If I can say this without being disparaging to urban areas, there is a civility in rural communities that you do not witness as much in urban communities.

345. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your presentation. I found the written briefing that was provided very helpful, but I also have the benefit of having met some of the projects involved in the Contested Spaces programme, particularly the project around active, respectful communities that was led by Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). It took six schools from Ardoyne and the Shankill and brought them together for early years family work, parenting work and community relations education. I think that it has now become known as the Buddy scheme. That is obviously a Community Relations in Schools term that has been inserted into the Together: Building a United Community strategy. I was sceptical about that when I first saw it in T:BUC, but, having met CRIS and the people involved in the project, I have experienced at first hand the benefits that it has brought to the areas.

346. Surprisingly, it is not just the young people from starkly different

backgrounds getting to interact but grown men from the Shankill and Ardoyne, who openly confess that they have had interaction as a result of the programme that they would never normally have had. Indeed, it is important to remember that it takes great courage for them to have that interaction. In some of those communities, interacting with people from the "wrong side" is extremely risky and takes quite a lot of courage. The benefits of the projects are clear and should be developed.

347. My big concern and query is around the fact that phase 1 of Contested Spaces finished around April 2014. I think that phase 2 runs until March 2015, so it is almost finished. T:BUC was published in May 2013, yet many of the excellent pilot programmes do not appear to have been taken forward by T:BUC at the rate that we would like to see. For example, my understanding, having met with Department of Education officials, is that the Buddy scheme is still at the business case stage, yet, as you said in your presentation, those are well-developed projects that are showing positive evaluation and results. Have you seen any more evidence than I have of OFMDFM and other Departments working proactively and rapidly to ensure that we do not lose the ground that has been gained by the successful delivery of some of the projects?

348. **Professor Knox**: We gave a presentation this morning to the good relations programme board. Therefore, civil servants, officials and special advisers are interested in the work.

349. It is probably something to do with the system of moving from the project to the implementation of Together: Building a United Community, where there was some sort of chasm developing. It is not that the learning is not there or that T:BUC is not aware of it, but the pace at which it seems to be unfolding is not aligned with some of the emerging learning.

350. Phase 1 of the programme finished last March and the second phase will finish in March 2015. That will be the end of the programme. That is why we are keen to push the principles, rather than ask for more money for the projects.

351. You talked about the Buddy scheme, and that is one of the commitments in Together: Building a United Community. CRIS has developed that as a concept. It is very proud of its work in that area, as it should be as, because it has been very successful.

352. There learning is there, but it is where that will go in Together: Building a United Community. As outsiders, it seems to us to be getting kicked around among the Department, the boards and the new authority, and no one is quite sure where it will end up. In the meantime, our fear is that, the greater the distance from the programmes, the learning, the experience and the trust that has been developed will start to dissipate. Some of the relationships will still exist, but those often need to be oiled with resources to help with further interventions. I am not saying that all the projects that are paid for out of the public purse should continue indefinitely, with more and more funding. That is why we have tried to stress the transferability of principles rather than projects.

353. **Mr Lyttle**: You have made a really important point. People take risks, show courage and get involved in the projects, and the time period in which they slip or are not sustained really damages people's confidence when it comes to continuing to be involved in that type of project.

354. I see that you stated in your presentation that the director of the good relations division in OFMDFM, Fergus Devitt — I do not think that he is still in that role — said that there is:

"real potential to scale-up some of the models",

355. which the Contested Spaces programme and pilot projects have developed "in difficult interface areas." However, the speed at which that is happening is frightening slow. I hope that your good

work is being heeded by the Department and that we will see a dramatic increase in the pace at which that is sustained and rolled out.

356. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: On the theme of things starting and then stopping again, I often think that, for those involved, it is almost like being in a game of snakes and ladders. You introduce an initiative and go up a very nice ladder to a better place, but, just as you get there and begin to enjoy it, you are hit with a big snake, because the funding or the programme is cancelled. You actually feel worse off, because you knew where you were.

357. **Professor Knox**: Can I give one very good example of that, Chair? We worked in Bessbrook in south Armagh, and one of the issues there was shared space, or, rather, the absence of it. The project there — the South Armagh Childcare Consortium (SACC) — was very successful. It spent quite a bit of time negotiating with the Churches about venues that would have traditionally have seen to have been aligned to one Church or the other. SACC spent a lot of time negotiating access to those venues, was successful in doing that and demonstrated that the trust that the Churches put in them was well founded, in the sense that subsequent programmes were very much cross-community and met needs in the area.

358. A question mark for us, having gone through that process and essentially having made those shared spaces rather than contested spaces or single-identity institutions, is, because they will not have the funding to run those activities subsequently, whether those buildings will revert to what they were. Those organisations and buildings are at the heart of communities that have had lots of conflict.

359. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Absolutely.

360. **Mr Maskey**: Sarah and Colin, thank you for your presentation. There is always a conundrum for how we measure that type of work. We all know that there are loads of excellent projects across a whole range of communities and sectors. Some of those will predate this project, while some will outlive it. Others, although one of their phases may have ended last year, are ongoing. For me, it is almost like trying to reduce the fear of crime among elderly people about burglaries. You can reduce crime against elderly people by 50%, but one highly publicised burglary will scare the life out of the population. I think therefore that, ultimately, it is about what you are actually looking for.

361. I was very encouraged by you, Colin, and Sarah when you said that there appears to be a wider range of positive outcomes as a result of some of the activity. Again, I am not sure that, if we are honest, we always know what we are really trying to measure. I favour doing a lot of work just because the work, by its nature, needs done. Yes, you can do it on a cross-community basis, bring people together and build other bridges at the same time. We all know that, for years, we probably spent a long time having coffee mornings and getting people together. As long as you did not talk about the Troubles or did not talk about your differences, it was great, but it was not.

362. **Mrs McWilliams**: I think that common issues such as education, homework support and childcare sometimes come up in conversation when people have built up that relationship. They will make friendships but perhaps be unaware that the other person is from a different community. Things will enter into conversation, but I suppose that that happens naturally, and people are quite accepting of the need to discuss things.

363. **Mr Maskey**: Is there a way of weaving things? If we do not face the realities that there are differences, we cannot deal with what the differences are or empower people to do that.

364. **Mrs McWilliams**: Yes. Different approaches have been used by each of the different projects. To go back to CRIS, it takes a very direct approach sometimes and has very

good workshops and residentials with the children and parents, whereas other projects have to focus on common issues and address issues of community relations through that but not directly. Different approaches work well in different situations, and a head-on approach does not always have to be taken. Certainly, they recognise that those issues need to be discussed and talked about.

365. **Mr Maskey**: Finally, a key thing is around sustaining the learning or transferring that on organically. How do we do that? When you are identifying a need in an area, that may mean that the education system, the health system or the community itself needs to work out that it needs to examine its practices and take responsibility for doing that. Ultimately, a lot of that will probably require mainstreaming so that the learning is built in and the problems are addressed on an ongoing basis. For me, that should filter out a lot of the very important issues, allowing people in the community to focus on why they are different and learn how to respect that. Unless you really get to the nub of the matter somewhere along the line, we can all be dead friendly to each other yet not talk about the problems, and that means that those problems are never addressed.

366. **Professor Knox**: I will expand a little on the Community Relations in Schools model, which I think is excellent on the point that you are making, Alex. CRIS starts off by saying, "What is the common issue here for parents?". In that particular model, it was saying, "We can do things better to educate our children together". Once it does that, it, in a sense, has hooked the parents, and I do not mean that in a pejorative way. The parents become interested in the process of learning with their children. CRIS then invites those parents to residentials, and those parents then know each other very well. They know each other in a very natural setting very well. They have built up trust. We have sat in on those residentials, which do not pull any punches on some of the hard issues. Therefore, it is not to suggest that, somehow or other, issues are brushed under the carpet; rather, they are dealt with in an environment in which trust has already been created around an issue that is outwith the conflict, sectarianism, and so on.

367. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How much more needs to be done on single-identity work as a precursor to groups engaging in interface and cross-community-type work?

368. **Professor Knox**: I will jump in here.

369. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I did not mean that to be a grenade.

370. **Professor Knox**: I am not a great fan of single-identity work at the stage that we have got to. That should now be passé. Clearly, there are difficulties in communities, particularly communities that suffered a lot over the whole conflict.We have reached the political circumstances where single-identity work should be very much a minor lead-in to stuff that is cross-community. We have moved beyond that, and we should have moved beyond that. We have spent enough money on that kind of single-identity work. There are models in place that accept and respect people's right to their own identity and perhaps the nervousness about that initial meeting and so on. There are ways of tackling that, and there are some excellent facilitators and mediators in this work now, who are very skilled in this kind of work.

371. **Mrs McWilliams**: I agree.

372. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Some support?

373. **Mrs McWilliams**: Projects that might have had a small bit of single-identity work, for example, with young people in Portadown, quickly moved to joint activities. I agree with Colin that there should be a small amount, if necessary, before quickly moving on.

374. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Let me expand it to the kind of area that you were looking at, which was contested

spaces. What about an area with a single-identity geography, which has issues because it is a single-identity village or town, but it is not homogeneous, in that there are —

375. **Professor Knox**: — factions?

376. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes.

377. **Professor Knox**: One project that we worked with was shared education in the Foyle area. Schools were relatively close. When trying to roll that out, as, indeed, the Department of Education will do with shared education, the geography, particularly of large urban spaces like Belfast, is such that you do not have the same opportunities for cross-community work as in other areas. That said, transport permitting — usually in urban areas that is not such a big issue — they should move as quickly as possible to pairing up or buddying up with schools. I think Sarah agrees. The quicker they get into that the better.

378. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: My point is this: in some areas, intra-community is as important for the grouping as cross-community is for many others. I accept, however, that this goes beyond what you were evaluating, which was contested space.

379. **Mr Attwood**: I appreciate that this is a how-long-is-a-piece-of-string question, and I have a sense of what your answer will be. As you indicated, the interfaces are more visible in urban areas, and the 21 or so walls that we now have in Belfast are very visible, in particular. Given that physical separation, but also the work you have been involved in, where are people in relation to doing something more concrete in respect of the interface — the structures as opposed to the emotions and other expressions of separation?

380. **Mrs McWilliams**: These projects have worked in certain areas and may have a limited geography. Certain areas, say, north Belfast, are still quite fragile at times. I go back to projects there. Even when there has been a slight step back on issues of parades or flags or disputes, the participants, particularly parents, come back in greater numbers to participate. They are almost saying, "We want to do this work, and we want to engage." Each community will be different, but there is still the resilience and desire to move forward in the projects despite a few setbacks. More work needs to be done, but there is a good foundation.

381. **Mr Attwood**: Do people in these projects get together and ask how they can moderate these structures?

382. **Professor Knox**: A good example of that is a school working with Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), which said that it had to get a bus to go to a school and that, if it negotiated for some space across the peace walls, the project would operate better. In this particular case, they went to a supermarket and said, "If you opened this gate, which is your property, we could access other schools more easily." They were taking those kinds of decisions themselves. It was really encouraging to hear parents saying on behalf of their children, "This might have divided us in the past, but now we see a better future for our children." I re-emphasise that the common learning was identifying an issue that was common to both communities and that they wanted to resolve.

383. I return to your point on communities at interface areas, particularly visible interface areas. The issue of social deprivation in those communities is very obvious to us and probably to you as well. That seems not to have moved on a lot despite quite a bit of resources being targeted at those communities. Is it because these communities have been so neglected by public services? How do we move those communities on? Those peace walls will not be tackled just by pulling down the wall. Those communities are the most deprived, and they feel it. They have not seen, to use the rhetoric, the peace dividend that other parts of Northern Ireland have. If we are able to push at that together through Together: Building a United Community, taking into account the common needs of those

communities, doing so in a way that is not artificial or contrived, that is not good-relations- type work or symbolises a desire to make everyone "protolic", then that work would have real meaning for those communities, and you would see much more buy-in from them collectively. It is about identifying the common issues.

384. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: And how to solve them.

385. **Professor Knox**: And how to solve them.

386. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: As you say, a lot of money has been put in, but nobody could be content with the outcomes.

387. **Professor Knox**: I am not here with a magic wand. A lot of money has been put into each community. Has the money really been used so as to cut across government Departments? Needs are not parcelled out into government Departments. Has it been used in a way that sees these communities as a collective, rather than individual parts?

388. **Mr Attwood**: I have a final question. You hinted at, or maybe even gave, the answer earlier. Did you find that people involved in projects were more resilient when things around them were more volatile?

389. **Professor Knox**: Absolutely.

390. **Mrs McWilliams**: There is a determination to continue to engage in the project. There may be a few wobbles, but the vast majority of people have made a decision themselves to continue to engage and to encourage others to engage.

391. **Mr Attwood**: To be more specific, then, at the height of the flags impasse, the people were pulled in different directions —

392. **Mrs McWilliams**: There were a few issues with some projects. They pulled back temporarily but then went back and continued.

393. **Professor Knox**: They did that of their own volition. People involved in delivering their projects said, "We are sensitive to the fact that it might be difficult for you to go here or go there." The fact, however, that they went back gave project deliverers the confidence. These people are saying, "We do not want that to be an impediment". They were sensible about their own security. I think your point is spot on. Maybe it is the nature of people on these projects that they are willing to become participants and are slightly more resilient. As Chris said, we have witnessed, in parent sessions, people who are hardliners in their own community and have softened — maybe that is the wrong description — to the extent that they say, "This has to change for the next generation, and we are going to be part of making it happen collectively."

394. **Mr Moutray**: Thank you for coming along today. If I picked you up right, you talked in your opening remarks about the benefits of intergenerational projects. Can I ask you to expand on that? We have the Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Society (CURBS) project in Portadown, which is doing a great work among the youth, not only on a cross-community but a cross-cultural basis, because we are finding that as many issues are cross-cultural as cross-community. I would like to have seen that as not only a youth project but across all ages. Will you expand on that?

395. **Professor Knox**: I absolutely endorse your comment about CURBS, which is an excellent project. Clearly, you have to work within certain parameters. They see their expertise as primarily in youth work, and they have done great work around that, particularly in working with ethnic minorities as part of that youth project. One of the successes of the CURBS project has been its working across statutory organisations. They work with statutory organisations and with youth groups. They have turned — maybe "turned" is the wrong word, but they have transformed — some of those contested spaces into shared spaces, such as the YMCA, St Mary's

Hall and all of those places that you know very well. However, they have not, to a great extent, concentrated on that intergenerational work. I do not think they would claim that they have done a lot of that. Some other projects will have done more of it, but, in the spread of the projects, we did not have projects that specifically targeted that kind work. Is that fair to say?

396. **Mrs McWilliams**: Yes, but there were excellent outcomes. The way that they work with young people, especially in the use of media and sport, is very innovative. They make a lot of films and DVDs. We have been to a number of events, and they are really fantastic in what they are achieving.

397. **Mr Moutray**: Absolutely, and I endorse that, but the problems that we find emanating at weekends, especially in a cross-cultural area, are not coming from the teenagers and the younger people; it is the older generation. If there could be something in the future to address that —

398. **Mrs McWilliams**: Yes, and I think CURBS or the Community Intercultural Programme (CIP) are great organisations that could move forward with that.

399. **Professor Knox**: Can I just pick up on a point that you have not made there, which ties into building united communities? There is a project in Craigavon that is doing excellent work with young people in summer camps and sports programmes. You look at the headline actions and T:BUC and ask why the learning from that project is not being immediately transferred into T:BUC. Why are they starting off with yet more pilots, when they could go to Portadown? I am not saying that Portadown/Craigavon is the only example of that, but, by dint of the kind of work that we are doing, we are saying that there are some excellent examples of stuff that is going on in areas where kids are hard to reach etc. Why can we not see the immediate transfer of that into building a united community? Why are they going out as if they have never done it before, starting with a clean sheet and going out for pilots etc?

400. **Mr Attwood**: I know that this is an inquiry, but, given the point that has just been made, why are we not replicating in T:BUC what is working in a hard place? Why do we not just ask? Are we recreating the wheel here unnecessarily?

401. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: On that, Colin and Sarah, you have made very clear your questioning of the wisdom and the funding of the pilots. We would need to get a sense from you of the extent to which you think OFMDFM has learned the lessons from the likes of the Contested Spaces programme and is transferring them into T:BUC. Beyond pilots, are there other things that you are critical of? Is there anything that you would speak in praise of in terms of the transfer?

402. **Professor Knox**: For me, one of the big issues is around shared education. There is lots of learning from a project that looked at schools in Derry/Londonderry. It was called Foyle Contested Space. I thought that was an excellent project. It had very clear boundaries, with the river and schools on both sides of that river. Officials from OFMDFM have carried those kinds of messages back to individual Departments. The officials that we work with have been very good at doing that and have been very supportive of the work that we have done in that sense. I just think that it is a little bit harder to infiltrate the system — to move from the level of individuals into the system. Maybe the pace of government grinds very slowly in that sense. I would say that that kind of learning from schools must offer great opportunities to take the work of shared campuses, the shared education programme and the work before the Education Committee now on the Shared Education Bill. There are ready-made models there that have lots of learning, including on some of the obstacles that they had to address and tackle. Other schools will have to do likewise. Once again, why not learn from that.

403. **Mrs McWilliams**: Yes. Because some of the lead headlines and actions in T:BUC are with other Departments, we need to be able to communicate from this to the other Departments, and there are learnings from that. Yes, we did that this morning.

404. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I think that that is the challenge. If it is going to finish positively, we need to look at the culture, rather than the speed of government. We do things vertically; we have environment, education, health and housing, and we now all know that, unless you can deliver that horizontally, you will not make a big positive different to people's lives.

405. **Professor Knox**: May I just make one final point, Chair. I think that there are opportunities to do that outwith central government now. So, I would be very optimistic about community planning — if it operates as it should — in the new 11 local authorities. I would describe community planning as almost like delivering social change at a local level. There are opportunities for holding Departments to account in the new 11 councils through the local government legislation. Whether central government Departments will be amenable to that is the challenge.

406. The second and final point that I would make is that I think that there is a real opportunity here for Peace IV. I do not think that there is sufficient alignment between what PEACE IV is offering with €45 million for shared education, €50 million for children and young people, €90 million for shared spaces and €30 million for civil society. This is the bread and butter of Contested Spaces and the bread and butter of Together: Building a United Community. Why are we not dovetailing those things so that the learning does not just go from Contested Space and other good projects, but from Contested Space to Together: Building a United Community to Peace IV. There are huge opportunities there.

407. **Mr Attwood**: I got a sense from what you said, Sarah, about your meeting this morning — I do not want to put words in your mouth — that you might have found it a bit frustrating, and, in your latter comments, you asked why we were not merging Peace V, Contested Spaces and T:BUC. Would it be fair to characterise your sense of things, including this morning, as frustrating?

408. **Professor Knox**: Let me give a diplomatic answer to that. I think that there is a willingness on the part of officials whom we deal with in OFMDFM and that there is an appetite for change and a willingness to learn from these things. All of those things have been hugely positive, and, indeed, very supportive of the kind of work that we have done. Maybe they experience the same sense of frustration as we may have expressed, maybe too vividly, but there is something in the system here that creates blockages when, for outsiders like us — maybe it is easy to say these things as an outsider — that pathway seems fairly clear.

409. **Mr Attwood**: That is forthright.

410. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, mark for us, out of 10, Contested Spaces as a tool or a foundation for delivering T:BUC.

411. **Professor Knox**: OK, so I will jump in — go ahead please.

412. **Mrs McWilliams**: I would put it at the upper end. I think that it is not perfect, so I would probably say seven.

413. **Professor Knox**: Yes, and I agree, with one caveat, which is that to mark something like that requires a consistency in the nature — the homogeneity — of the projects. We were looking at four different strands within those projects, and I think that some of them were a lot better than seven and some of them were less than seven, so maybe seven is a good place to land.

414. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We have your breakdown in your submission across those four.

415. **Mr Maskey**: I think that those two are on the wrong side of the table, Chairman. *[Laughter.]*

416. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Colin and Sarah, thank you. That was most informative.

21 January 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Professor Peter Shirlow	*Queen's University Belfast*
Professor Brandon Hamber	*Ulster University*

417. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We welcome to our meeting today Professor Hamber, who is director of the International Conflict Research Institute (INCORE) at Ulster University, and Professor Pete Shirlow, who is deputy director of the Institute for Conflict Transformation. The cover note in relation to this session from the Clerk is at page 136. Gentlemen — professors — you are both very welcome. Thank you for coming along. We did not get a paper from you, which is not an issue. I wonder whether you want to make some opening remarks.

418. **Professor Brandon Hamber (Ulster University)**: Yes, we both will make some opening remarks.

419. Thank you very much for inviting me to address the Committee. I can only assume that you have invited me here in my capacity as a practitioner and researcher who has been working on peace building and reconciliation issues for the last two decades in a range of societies, as well as in my role as director of INCORE at Ulster University. With that in mind and given the limited time, I will restrict my five-minute opening comments to the issue of how the strategy might be seen within the global field of peace building and reconciliation.

420. The strategy outlines a vision of a united community:

"based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation."

421. I will not go on to read the rest of the vision; you are all familiar with it. I commend the Executive for this bold vision and the steps that they have started to take to realise that. It is also right that, as the strategy says, this is understood as a journey towards a more united and shared society. The idea of a journey is consistent with the notion of process, and most of the international literature on peace building and reconciliation talks about concepts as essentially processes, rather than as destinations in themselves.

422. The strategy recognises the damaging nature of societal division and seeks to:

"address the deep-rooted issues that have perpetuated segregation and resulted in some people living separate lives."

423. It goes on to say that "division, intolerance, hate and separation", unless addressed, can damage individuals and communities in various ways, including in terms of economic prospects. In other words, the strategy itself highlights social segregation and separation as socially and economically problematic.

424. The core question, therefore, in reading the strategy is whether the actions outlined align with its vision and are adequate to make the types of changes needed to transform the society. I contend that the headline actions outlined in the strategy are steps in the right direction, but they are not sufficient to address the full weight of the problems that the strategy itself outlines.

425. For example, according to the Department of Education, there are

308,095 pupils enrolled in primary and post-primary schools. One cannot calculate with complete accuracy, but for illustrative purposes, that figure suggests that 100 summer school camps, engaging 100 pupils at post-primary level, would only reach 7% of pupils. Even if we bumped that up to 1,000 pupils attending each camp, we would only touch 70% of the pupils for a once-off and, no doubt, unwieldy series of events. Equally, extrapolating broadly across the school-going population, and assuming that every child is participating in these activities at post-primary level, 10 shared campuses would reach 3% to 4% of the total number of pupils over five years. That does not mean that such actions are useless or that they cannot be scaled up or grown. On the contrary, it has been well established in international and social psychological research for decades that, under certain conditions, contact between groups can promote positive views of one another. Any increase of contact between school-age children and young people representing different traditions is to be welcomed, but, as a recent report on shared education notes, an environment that seemingly reinforces a monoculture order can limit the potential success of any programme. It added, and I quote from Joanne Hughes:

"it is hardly surprising that pupils, who meet with peers from the 'other' community for short periods (albeit sustained over time) and in a highly structured setting, struggle to develop friendships that can be maintained outside of the school setting".

426. In other words, contact programmes taking place within the overall segregated context that the strategy itself talks about, despite some positive potential, could essentially be seen as a sticking plaster on a system that is largely not conducive to creating positive attitudes between groups. It is possible to argue, for example, that shared education might be able to grow incrementally, or some of the other activities themselves might also be able to grow, and that seems implicit within the strategy. However, there is very little evidence that relatively small-scale cross-community projects taking place within a divided society will change the overall context substantially. International research suggests that contact programmes need to be complemented by substantial social change to be effective. Those who study the practice of conflict transformation globally name a peace that does not alter underlying forms of separation a "negative peace". This is a context where political violence has decreased, but the underlying issues that fuel the conflict have not been addressed.

427. Despite the boldness of the vision stated in the strategy, I ask the Committee to seriously assess whether the actions outlined in the strategy are adequate to achieve the objectives it lays out. From a policy perspective, it is counterintuitive to set up a range of new programmes to bring children and young people into meaningful contact with one another and in collaborative ventures at great expense in terms of resources and time, when the context itself is going to potentially undermine some of those achievements.

428. Of course, we all know that there are many reasons why the context cannot be changed instantly or overnight, and we must foster contact where we can. However, to lose sight of the fact that the most logical place to foster contact is in an integrated classroom, or in neighbourhoods where communities use the same services and recreational facilities on a day-to-day basis, is missing the most obvious and long-term solution to the problem that you are grappling with. What is needed is a large-scale policy with a timetable for breaking down the separation in daily life that the report talks about. That timetabling is evident in the strategy — for example, in the recommendation to remove the so-called peace walls by 2023 — but it is lacking in relation to other barriers to integration, such as schooling or residential mixing.

429. In conclusion, I welcome the steps which the strategy outlines towards achieving greater social contact between communities. However, I contend that, in

the absence of a bolder social process to break down separation, they may not achieve the full impact that they are intended to have. In other words, the society will remain in a negative rather than a positive peace and will remain constantly at risk of ongoing and future conflict.

430. I thank you very much for your time and for inviting me to share my views.

431. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you very much indeed. From Ulster University to Queen's.

432. **Professor Peter Shirlow (Queen's University Belfast)**: I note that you and I are wearing the same shirt. That does not denote political allegiance, necessarily. *[Laughter.]*

433. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: They are similar shirts; surely not the same.

434. **Professor Shirlow**: Yours is probably bespoke tailored. *[Laughter.]* I have to say —

435. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What a great start.

436. **Professor Shirlow**: You have to set up a barrier between people.

437. Leading on from what has been said before, I am going to talk specifically about a piece of research that we have done that echoes a lot of what Brandon has just spoken about. It is known as the Northern Ireland Project. It is a longitudinal study of relationships between political violence, sectarianism and the well-being of children living in segregated communities in Belfast. It covers 24 interface areas within the city. It is conducted in partnership between the University of Notre Dame, the Catholic University of America in Washington DC, and the University of Ulster. The results that I am going to talk about here are from funding by the National Institutes of Health in the United States. The project was led by Professor Mark Cummings at the University of Notre Dame, who is a globally renowned psychologist. These notes have been prepared with the help of Laura Taylor, who has now recently moved to QUB, which means that we can continue with a lot of the work that we have been doing.

438. The study is based on what is known as an ecological process-oriented model. I will explain what that means when we get to the results. Basically it looks at the pathways between political and sectarian violence, and also political and sectarian antisocial behaviours. So we are looking at sectarianism as in being attacked, which we consider to be violence, and antisocial behaviour, which is name-calling, graffiti, etc. So it looks at the impact of that and also of crime within those communities, and it is based on family functioning and adolescent adjustment: how families and children cope with political violence, sectarian violence, sectarian antisocial behaviour, crime and other antisocial behaviour in the community.

439. Quite clearly, this country has taken very positive steps towards peace but, as you know, in a study like this we are studying families that are living in communities that are still highly segregated. We also know that these are places in which you will have much higher levels of recorded sectarian crime and where people are much more likely to experience antisocial behaviour. Of course, new forms of sectarianism have emerged in recent years, most notably through the internet. That has become another site where young people, in particular, trade sectarian insults and attitudes towards each other.

440. So the study is basically about risk. What is the risk? How does the experience of being in that environment influence you in terms of becoming a perpetuator who engages in that type of violence or antisocial behaviour, a witness to that type of behaviour or a victim of it. What does that mean? How does that impact on your life? We are looking at all these multiple processes. They very much overlap with one another, in terms of how families live in those communities, and clearly there is interest in studying families in which the parents are mostly pre-ceasefire and the children post-ceasefire, so you have two

different sets of lifestyles which have been influenced, and that has an impact on how families function and work together.

441. So we are looking at relationships within families and communities, relationships between communities, and interpersonal relationships within families, and at what protects people from those issues. There are actually ways in which people are very much protected within their community from those types of issues. We also look at the positive things that come out of these communities with regard to those issues. It helps us understand how sectarianism is being reproduced in communities, and it also gives us a good guide as to whether there will be a long-term stabilisation of the peace process.

442. This was based on three phases. There were focus groups, and then there was the measure of these issues. Then, over six years, we followed 700 mothers and their children in these interface communities. Some of these children are now parents. When we started off, they were 14 or 15, and they are now in their early 20s. Some of these people are now 16,17 and 18. We did not get 700 families each year — it went down to about 550 — but, over the six-year period, we have a very sizable database that tells us about the experiences of people's lives living in these 24 segregated communities throughout the period 2006-2012.

443. Four research findings came out of this very strongly, which I think are relevant to the youth strategy in T:BUC and how they should be factored in. I think that that picks up on some of the points that were made earlier about what it is that we are trying to tackle and how we are going to tackle it. The first is measuring emotional security. That is measured in two ways: first, how emotionally secure you feel that you are in your family and, secondly, how emotionally secure you feel in your community. If you live in a family in which there is a high level of support, if there is a lot of good functioning in the family, if you feel that you are part of your community and interact with it and if you feel that you have a role in your community, that basically protects you from sectarian behaviour. You will experience sectarian behaviour, but you will not be affected by mental health problems and aggression. That is very important.

444. The first thing that we are doing here is that we are not pathologising communities. We are showing that there are differences and that factors like the family influence people's attitudes and behaviours. Among families where that is not the case and where there is much more fracture in the family and you do not feel part of the community, sectarian violence and antisocial behaviour create traumas, depressions and anxiety amongst young people. One of the things that is really important to understand here is that family structure, if it is supportive, buffers you from these factors. If you do not have strong family support, you are very negatively affected by what happens around you in terms of trauma, difficulty and other such things. There is quite clearly a policy outcome here, which is to identify ways to increase emotional security in the family and the community despite experiencing ongoing conditions. Hopefully, everybody understands that. Emotional security in the family and emotional security in your community protects you from sectarian experiences. If you do not have that and it is the other way in your family and your community, it affects you very badly and you will adopt mental health problems, anxieties and stresses.

445. The second finding is on social identity. This is based on how you much you identify with the label Catholic/nationalist/republican or Protestant/unionist/loyalist. What we find here works out as both a benefit and a burden. The more that you sense that you are one of those two groups and have a really strong sense of identity within those groups, it is a protective buffer. If you feel that you are really Protestant or really Catholic, you do not really have any maladaptive influences because of sectarian violence etc. However, if you also have a strong

identity, you are much more likely to be involved in sectarian out-group behaviour. If identity is strong, you are more likely to be involved in something like interface violence, rioting or other types of behaviour. There is a very strong issue here about the strength of identity. Identity buffers you and makes you feel part of a community, but it also makes you outplay your actions against the other community. If your identity is weaker, you are more likely not to be involved in sectarian behaviour and sectarian practices. There is a very strong finding on that.

446. There is another policy outcome for T:BUC. Social identity works in good and bad ways, so integrationists needs to take account of that. One of the questions that we really have to look at here is maybe a bigger question in T:BUC: what is the value of single-identity work? There is a very strong relationship. That also came out in the work that we did on the flag protests recently, and you see that in life and times surveys. People who have very negative attitudes tend to have much stronger senses of identity.

447. The third finding is about family cohesion, which is not the same as emotional security. How cohesive your family is and how you feel within the family also buffers children from developing aggression and lessens the amount that you will be sectarian against the other community. If your family is very cohesive, not just emotionally but in that there is work and you are attending school and you understand your family as a good, strong dynamic, that makes children less sectarian. You can see from the first and the third finding that the strengthening of family is very important in any policies that we have, and, if families support each other, this seems to decrease overall adolescent aggression and also reduces the impact that you will involve in other groups. I assume that, in layperson terms, we are talking about your parents not letting you go out in the street when there are riots. If your family are keeping you in some sort of order, that has a big impact. Poverty and all of these factors are big players in family cohesion.

448. The final research finding is quite interesting. If you do not feel part of your group, you are much more likely to engage in cross-community activity. If you have been beaten up or assaulted by people in your own community or if there is aggression towards you in your own community, that makes you much more likely to want to engage in cross-community activity. I do not know how we deal with in terms of policy, but youths who experience in-group antisocial activity are more likely to help or be positive about the out group. These are all important things to find, and we are finding that improving attitudes about the other group over time does increase helping pro-social acts or behaviours between the two communities.

449. To finish off, the root of those findings is still related to poverty, income in the home, how well the children perform at school and all of those positive factors. The higher that those positive factors are, generally, the less sectarian a young person will be, with the exception of if they have a really strong sense of identity and are functioning solely in their own community, and that is reinforcing prejudice towards the other issues.

450. Very quickly, I will go through with regard to T:BUC. I understand the overarching principles, and I agree with what Brandon has said. What is it that we are trying to change? If we are going to challenge sectarianism, what is it? What is sectarianism? What is racism? What is prejudice? I am not sure that we really have proper working definitions of what we are trying to change. What are these things? How do we account for them? If you are trying to change something or challenge something, you need to have a definitional basis on which to challenge that. I think that that is one of the things that is very important. As I have said before, in sustaining peace, maybe with the youth programme and T:BUC, if we have this evidence and you agree with it, should we not be doing more at the site of the family? Should we

not be working at that site? So youths should not be sectioned away from their families; youth and the relationship with the family seems to be very important in how people behave and their attitudes and how they cope in their societies.

451. On shaping policy, this obviously needs joined-up government. If we go down that route of looking at family, we can show that, in families where there are mental health problems amongst the parents, some of it being trauma-related from the past, that is being reproduced. Clearly, there is a need for joined-up government where we are working with these issues. Quite clearly, we need to stimulate participation. The people who lead this, quite clearly, have to be able to get people to participate, and Brandon made that point. Finally, the whole delivery of this has to be something that has much sharper aims and objectives. It has to be something that we can evaluate, and hopefully the research that we have done will be a basis for maybe designing some of the youth activities. It might be a way that you can have a measure to look at what success actually is through the T:BUC programme.

452. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Peter, thank you very much indeed. Brandon, I will go back to the very start and talk about processes and journeys. I have a two-part question. First, how would you define the difference between this as a process and this as a journey?

453. **Professor Hamber**: I think that I was saying the opposite. I was saying that the idea of a journey could be seen as analogous to the idea of a process, rather than as something separate.

454. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So it is a journey that would have a destination, potentially.

455. **Professor Hamber**: I think that what I was arguing for is that you could set a series of destination goals, but all of those will have to be incremental in how you get to those. I do not need to tell you all that you cannot change that overnight, so you have to set a series of stages and steps for where you might go. My observation of the document is that it is not very strong in outlining that direction. The principle of it being a process that is leading somewhere is mentioned, but it is not really followed in the text, broadly speaking.

456. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: A common criticism of government here is that we are process- and input-driven and do not have enough focus on the outputs, and particularly the outcomes. You say, "Our vision is we are here, and this is where we want to be", and then you build the bridge, the road or whatever analogy you want to put in to get to that endpoint. How well does T:BUC do in that regard?

457. **Professor Hamber**: I was trying to articulate that there is quite a strong vision articulated in terms of the type of society that the document envisages, but there is not a very clear sense of how you get from A to B. It talks about very high-level and serious problems — it routinely uses the words, "segregation", "separation" and "violence" — but the steps that it outlines to deal with those types of macro social problems are not that well articulated.

458. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Why would that be? There are yourselves and any number of experts within your field, the voluntary and community sector, communities and families who would be more than willing to input.

459. **Professor Hamber**: Would you like me to respond again?

460. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes. For example, what input did you have before T:BUC was published?

461. **Professor Hamber**: At a personal level, I engaged in a range of different discussions. I did not make a submission — *[Interruption.]*

462. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Sorry, Brandon.

463. **Professor Hamber**: In terms of your question about why there is a vision but it is not quite clear how we get to that vision, I did not really have

time to articulate this in my paper. Arguably there are different ideas of what some of those words mean. That goes back to Pete's point about what sectarianism is. What does "separation" or "segregation" mean? What does "shared" actually mean? If you look across the different political parties, there is often a different vision of what that means.

464. In theory, there is an author called Louis Kriesberg, and he talks about thin and thick reconciliation. By that, he means that for some people the notion of reconciliation essentially involves there being no violence and then saying "You walk down one side of the street, I will walk down the other. We will respect who we are, and that is fine." Then there is a thicker notion of reconciliation, which involves social, cultural and community integration. When you read through this document and its predecessors, there seems to be a battle over whether people hold a thick version of the future in terms of reconciliation or a thin version. That continually knocks on into the CSI document. You see that debate all the way through the documents.

465. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is a strong point: there is not a shared definition of some of these concepts. We have two issues, therefore: the end goal — the vision — is open to interpretation, and the route map for how we get there is not clear. How do you fix those two fundamental problems?

466. **Professor Hamber**: Do you want me to answer how we fix the problems?

467. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is not a free lunch.

468. **Professor Hamber**: I will make a stab at it if you want.

469. **Professor Shirlow**: You have to have definitional robustness. If you are going to design anything, you have to have that. I teach students, so I need to have a curriculum: I need to have something that defines exactly what I am going to deliver to my students. The way we have skirted around with these terms has been part of the problem. There are probably very strong ideological difference over what those terms mean.

470. The way we did it in our project was to ask the families who participated what they thought the definition was. Going back to your original point, there are people who could come up with a relatively workable definition of these issues. If you do not have definitional robustness, I do not understand what you are going to change. It does not matter whether it is thick or thin; it matters in terms of what you would expect to be an evaluation.At the end of T:BUC, what would you measure as success? It is easy for us as academics: you deliver the policies and programmes, and we sit on the sidelines and judge them in hindsight. However, if I were designing a piece of research — I am sure that Brandon is the same — I would start with the outcomes that I am looking for. I would ask myself where the strategy will take me to and what the outcome will be. Sometimes, we work the other way around and saying, "Let's set something up that might take us to those outcomes". This will be a bumpy train, and you are perhaps not going to deliver the outcomes that you have set, but I am not really sure what those outcomes are, and we are certainly not sure what the definitions are. Without that foundation, everything slides.

471. One thing that we have not done in this society is to promote the idea of conflict transformation. Some communities and individuals are afraid of that type of peacemaking. The whole spirit of conflict transformation is that you do not have to change your identity. We have been very bad at selling the idea of reconciliation not being threatening. It is about how you practise your identity, and we see that in the survey work that we did. Some people practise their identity very well. They maintain a certain sense of their community identity and engage in intercommunity activity. Without being egotistical, I would say that the research that we have here is the sort of evidence that you need to know how to tackle the problem. Hopefully, what I have presented today might be novel to

people or not something that they have thought about.

472. It is about having that connection between researchers and politicians, and you have evidence here that shows that the issues are not simply orange and green. They are influenced by family, poverty and dysfunction. Those are important stepping stones that we have to have.

473. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK, but do we have to have a homogeneous definition of those things, or is it valid to say that, because, in area a, the thin definition of reconciliation is perfectly acceptable because it works, and, in area b, the thick definition is possible and works, we should live with that?

474. **Professor Shirlow**: Neither will work unless you take away the heat. Unless you take away sectarian violence and sectarian antisocial behaviour, nothing will work. It goes back to challenging the problem. What is the problem that you are trying to challenge?

475. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: But thick and thin work.

476. **Professor Shirlow**: Thick and thin reconciliation will evolve if we change the nature of what people have to experience in their communities. It goes back to what you are trying to design. If we have significant decline in sectarian behaviour and practices, that surely will have an influence that may then take us on the journey to thick or thin. If we have people who are still being marginalised and attacked and who feel that their community is being assaulted, we will not go anywhere.

477. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: No, but I heard Brandon say — what I assume he is saying — that you can have a situation in which you have got away from sectarianism. If it is thin reconciliation, you have people walking up and down different sides of the street and not really engaging, but if it is thick reconciliation, they engage. If you can achieve either, depending on what suits a local community, is that acceptable?

478. **Professor Hamber**: What I was saying is that you might have got away from active and direct forms of violence. That does not mean, depending on your definition, that you have got away from sectarianism. If you define sectarianism, as the document does, as being a direct threat or direct forms of violence, you can say, yes, we have got away from sectarianism.

479. If you define sectarianism differently, in terms of the types of attitudes or views that you hold being damaging to or negative about another community, you might have got away from violence, but you have not got away from sectarianism. We could debate for a long time whether that is the correct definition, but it illustrates the point about it depending on how you define the problem that you are dealing with.

480. Underneath that is what your theory of change is. How do you see the change happening? The document oscillates between three theories of change, broadly speaking. One is attitudinal change, in that, if people change their mindset and the way in which they think about things, there starts to be changes in society. In other places, it is like a behavioural notion of change. Therefore, if we make communities safer, police better and prevent people from acting in ways, things will start to change. Other parts of the document seem to imply the idea of structural, contradictory change. Therefore, if we start to change poverty and people's access to resources, things will start to change.

481. What we know is that it has to be all three of those simultaneously. However, I think that at different points, and for different reasons, people will buy into different parts of that model rather than try to buy into all of it. It is not that your task is easy. Trying to move from the society that we have been in is an incredibly complex process.

482. **Professor Shirlow**: The thing about our study and other work that I have done is that some young people engage in sectarian behaviour and do not really know the history of why they do that or

why the communities are divided. They do not really have a vocabulary. It is simply about venting at other problems in their life. We saw that with the flag protest. I do not know this completely, but there was some sort of evidence that a lot of the young people involved had special needs, and other kids who were spoken to at the time were venting about other, wider problems in their life, such as poverty, break-up in the family or violence at home. Those were factors in their life that were making them behave in a certain way and choose a target. They think, "Because I live in this community, the target is over there", without actually knowing what the target is and why they are doing what they are doing. Therefore, there is a practical problem as well. You have to look at what the actions are and why they happen.

483. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am just trying to tease this out. If, as an Assembly and an Executive, we set a vision, and that vision is open to interpretation, is it necessarily a bad thing if the various interpretations to some extent represent positive progress, possibly not the end of the journey but a good step forward? Should we not embrace that and recognise that it is not a homogeneous society and that some areas will be more open and ready to take a step than others? That takes me to the other point, which is the question of who is in charge, because it seems to me that we can set a direction of travel, publish a very detailed route map and effectively impose that, or we can recognise that there are so many different players here, such as government, you, families, communities, the voluntary and community sector, and the statutory bodies. If it were an orchestra, and once you say, "This is the tune that we are going to play", who should have the baton? Should it be passed around? Who drives this?

484. **Professor Shirlow**: Once again, it is about what you expect the outcome to be. To me, an outcome would be a significant reduction in sectarian violence and antisocial behaviour. Therefore, if we were to implement an evidential basis, and we set up a programme of activities that did that, that would be progress, because it comes out of what Brandon was saying and what I have been trying to say, which is that that change in relationships could affect something else. Of course, a lot of it will be going into the unknown, but we did not know what the National Health Service would be like until we set it up. We did not know what its impact would be. However, setting up the National Health Service was the right thing to do despite opposition at the time. As legislators, there are things that you can do, and if those things are designed properly, we can have a successful outcome in that sense. As I said earlier, I do not think that any of us is against people having their identity. The point is that we want people to practise their identity in ways that are not based on intimidating the other community and harming themselves. A great deal of sectarian practice also harms you.

485. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: My question is around designing it properly. How do you do that? The key question within that is this: who does it? Is it done up here by officials, or do you devolve that power and accept that there may be solutions that, at a local level, will be significantly different from area to area?

486. **Professor Shirlow**: Say, for example, that you do it through T:BUC and have actors who then engage in delivering that. The issue there is having the right people to do that. You need people who are able to drive community participation, people who are trained in understanding good citizenship and people who are trained in tackling the issues. I cannot speak for Brandon, but I think that T:BUC somehow throws up many more issues than it resolves, because, in some ways, we are still at an infancy stage in understanding what we are trying to change. We know what the blunt end of it is, but, without agreement on what the problem is, we are not necessarily sure about what we are trying to change.

487. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You are talking about people who are properly

or relevantly trained, yet two of your four conclusions are about the importance of the family.

488. **Professor Shirlow**: Yes. We have all sorts of governmental interventions for families in distress. What we say from our research project is that joined-up government should be coping with those issues. The young lad who involves himself in a sectarian practice will be dealt with by the police or the criminal justice system, but the family may well also be being dealt with by social services. Are those joined up?

489. **Mrs Hale**: This has been very interesting today, so thank you very much. My question is for Professor Hamber. You mentioned a term that really caught my attention: a negative peace. Can you explain that and give an example? What are the long-term consequences of a negative or empty peace? That speaks to me as something that is brittle and hollow and that lacks content. Obviously, T:BUC is designed to get to the root of the communities that are experiencing division.

490. **Professor Hamber**: I did not bring a formal definition of "negative peace", but, broadly speaking, the idea of a negative peace is that there has potentially been a decrease in direct forms of violence but a lot of the underlying causes of the conflict, whether inequality, separation or attitudinal or behavioural issues, remain in place. You might have a situation that looks peaceful on the outside, but, underneath, a lot of the structural issues remain. The most recent peace monitoring report, or the one before it, talked about the idea of community shocks, so if there is an event that takes place, such as we saw with the flag protest or whatever, and a lot of the underlying issues are not addressed, those can resurface quite quickly. There are numerous global examples of that. Some people argue, for example, that somewhere such as Cyprus could be considered to be a situation of negative peace, where no direct forms of violence are going on, but nothing is going anywhere very fast. You will hear people use that term about Northern Ireland, despite some of the progress that has been made. The essential point is about failing to address the underlying issues that are causing the conflict. The challenge, of course, is the debate about what those are. That is the bigger debate that we have been having. How do we agree what those are?

491. **Mrs Hale**: Do you feel that, if there is a negative peace, we run the risk of fomenting the situation and having other disenfranchised communities join in sectarianism? We have perhaps seen that with racism and other stuff joining underneath that, and the situation is exploited.

492. **Professor Hamber**: Yes, that is the logical conclusion.

493. **Mr Maskey**: Thank you, Pete and Professor Hamber. This has been a very interesting discussion so far. Your expertise being brought to bear and the amount of research underlines the fact that you have not really yet got the answer or asked the right questions. What are we trying to resolve? I do think that we moved into a period of negative peace. Indeed, we were dangerously in a process of negative peace. The peace process should be positive. It should be about moving forward, but it was in danger of going backwards. Although we had a peace process and an end, more or less, to the vast bulk of street conflict, we were having a battle politically, which was potentially unravelling all the progress that we had made over the past number of years.

494. Like a lot of other people around the table, as a representative I have been involved in giving out funding amounting to millions of pounds to projects across different communities for tackling disadvantage, including tackling disadvantage as a mechanism for communities to work together, and for single identity work, where people could try to build their self-confidence, if that is what they identified themselves as lacking before they could engage with others. We put on the table projects that asked the hard questions about

what makes us different and why we are fighting over matters. I could not say, hand on heart, that all that money was wonderfully well spent, but it was a very important process to have been involved in. I am talking primarily about European Peace money a number of years ago. A lot of work and funding is continuing to this day. I am not sure that we are honest enough to ask the right questions of ourselves. You can talk in terms of communities, as Brenda did, that are divided. Sometimes, I think that people tend to talk about the problem being "all over there". It is all somewhere else and not within me or us, dare I say that. When people use the terminology the "two tribes", I am probably defined as being part of one tribe, but I find that offensive. As a fan of native American Indians, I hear people talk about "tribes", and I am not against that, but it is a pejorative term and is very condescending, actually.

495. We need to do something different. I do not like it when people talk about the two tribes or when people define your politics as sectarian. I would like to think that I am not sectarian. I certainly do not want to be sectarian, but a lot of people outside my community probably say, "Well, you are one of the sectarian politicians". We do not have agreement on that.

496. During the flag protests, not every person who went through the courts was a young person who was disadvantaged or came from a broken family. When you read the court transcripts, a lot were of an age — in their 30s, 40s or 50s — and working. Most were looking for bail because they did not want to lose their job. It does not always stack up to have just a cadre over there who are really struggling, are from a broken family or have difficulties. There are correlations, as you well know. You are academics, and I am not, and you know that there are correlations between poverty, disadvantage and other forms of breakdown. If there is a broken-down or disadvantaged community, there will be problems that will manifest themselves in some way. If you go to Birmingham, Dublin or Limerick, and if there is disadvantage, and corruption is allowed, problems will manifest themselves in one way or another. We just happen to have the political platform here. People can get involved as a result or exploit the situation and become sectarian and abusive on the streets.

497. I am quite firm in my own mind. Sometimes we look at the problem as being the fact that we have peace walls. We also have velvet curtains. We are all political party representatives. We all canvass at hundreds and thousands of doors. When I canvass, I find that people are quite honest, especially the longer that they know you, even people who would never vote for you. I find that people are quite good at being honest, which I appreciate. People are also firm in their views. That does make them wrong or sectarian, but they are firm in their views. Or perhaps they are sectarian, and that is why we need firm laws to make sure that people do not translate that into abusing people because they are different from them and act out what I would call sectarianism, which is discriminating against somebody.

498. It is difficult, Chair, because it is a multilayered problem that we are trying to deal with. For me, the Good Friday Agreement process was important, because that said for the first time that you are entitled to be different and to have a different view. What we now need to do as a society is learn to respect that.

499. Over the years, I have had people from the velvet curtain side of the community say to me, "What more do you want? You got the Good Friday Agreement". I reply that all that I want is to see it implemented. It is about equality and about allowing us all to speak our mind without being slapped down every time that we want to say something that is not conventional.

500. T:BUC is another process that, in due course, people will write off or say that it was a good job or that a good effort was made with it. I do not think that it can be as successful as we would all like to think, because it goes back to this

point: how do you define what we are really looking for? Would we measure a positive outcome as people saying, "I totally respect your right to say what you have said"?

501. **Ms McGahan**: Thank you for your presentation. Brandon, I want to pick up on a comment that you made about contact programmes. You referred to them as sometimes being a sticking plaster. In my constituency of Fermanagh and South Tyrone — I represent in particular the south Tyrone area — the contact programme has resulted in agreement between two communities for a shared educational campus, which I am sure you have heard tell of, for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School. Would you acknowledge that that is a successful and significant outcome from the contact programmes?

502. **Professor Hamber**: Certainly. There are contact programmes and there are contact programmes. What we know from a theoretical perspective is that contact works between communities and individuals under certain conditions. It works best when people feel that they have an equal level of status in their contact. It works best when people feel that they have some sense of identity with the groups that are in contact with each another. It has also been found that it generally works best when people are working on larger problems. Therefore, instead of coming into the room to talk about their differences, they are engaging in something actively.

503. Finally, the research suggests that contact needs to be sustained over a long period. The idea of once-off contact or weekend engagements does not necessarily always show as positive results for contact. I do not know the full details of the programme, although I know of it. My guess is that it meets those four types of conditions, so that example may well be one of a very successful form of contact.

504. However, there are other examples of community-based programmes that do not meet those four types of conditions, and we are investing in those programmes but not getting the types of outcomes we seek. The bigger question for me is this: as a Government, what is the best way of doing them? Do we want to scale up those types of initiatives, or are we saying, "That's a massive investment, which has been successful, using a certain type of approach", when there are other places in which we could foster contact, such as our recreational facilities and our schools, more naturally? That, for me, is the bigger question, rather than the success or weakness of the project.

505. **Professor Shirlow**: One of the things that we found in our research was that the young people who took part in intercommunity activities came from homes that were much more secure. One of the problems was that the kids who were engaged in sectarian violence or sectarian antisocial behaviour were not participating in community activities. Therefore, what you had was contact between children from both communities who were not particularly sectarian or were from families that were more open to that type of interaction. Those whom you found outside of that were the kids from the more maladaptive situations, who were not participating in anything. That goes back to the structure of the family, where the family is saying, "You should take part in this intercommunity scheme. You should engage".

506. It seems to me that those in that "out" group — those who do not engage — are usually picked up in things such as restorative justice schemes, when we have got to a stage at which we are dealing directly with the problem. That can be very important as well. Sorry, this all complicates what T:BUC is trying to achieve, but there is another layer there of trying to recognise who is participating in the positive interaction programmes between communities and who is not. Finding out who is not is probably very important as well.

507. T:BUC could try to engage with those types of hard-to-reach communities. We know what happens with young males especially: when they get to a certain age, they take to a bottle of cider and

are not interested in such activities, because they are too soft, not fun, and so on. As part of that process, they go back on the street, behave in other antisocial ways and engage in sectarian activity or violence, or both. There is a very strong link between being sectarian and being involved in non-sectarian crime. The hard to reach are very important in those contacts and interactions.

508. **Ms McGahan**: Is there a difference between urban and rural areas in building a united and shared community?

509. **Professor Shirlow**: There is most certainly anecdotal evidence that, in the cities, the relationships are a bit more reproduced and a bit harder. There is a cheek-by-jowl analysis: in the rural areas, because people are not necessarily living 6 feet or 2 metres away, the context can be slightly different. From the research that I have done in the past, rural youth tend may have very strong opinions, but they do not tend to act them out in the same sort of way; namely, through antisocial behaviour or violence.

510. **Professor Hamber**: Broadly speaking, there is significantly less focus on rural communities than there is on urban communities. You might say that more people live in urban areas, but, in academia and a whole range of other fields, there seems to be a lot less focus on rural areas. Pete has done some work on that, but it is looked at less.

511. **Ms Fearon**: Thanks very much. This has been so interesting, and we have all enjoyed it.

512. I wish to focus on another disenfranchised group across all communities. Women were largely excluded from the peace process, and they still are to a large extent. You just have to look around this place for proof of that. I know that we are a post-conflict society, and I heard Brandon say earlier that it looks peaceful from the outside and that there is less violence, but, to date, we have never acknowledged the differential impact that the conflict had on women and men. We have some of the highest levels of domestic violence, and you cannot get away from the fact that that links to dependency on alcohol and to mental health issues. It would be interesting to hear your opinion on how T:BUC addresses, or does not address, that. There is a feeling out there that there is an almost tokenistic reference to women in the strategy. The gender equality strategy is mentioned once or twice, but that is it. To date, we have not acknowledged the impact that the conflict had on women. How do we resolve such issues?

513. **Professor Shirlow**: It is very clear that, in the traditional structure of our society, women are central to picking up the pieces, such as through providing emotional security and family cohesion. There is a domesticated role in that sense. Women tend to be there when the problems happen in the family, and they are there in the more supportive roles as well. One of the things that we found very strongly was that females — young females as well as mothers — were more likely to try to turn people away from sectarianism and violence. They saw that as — this reproduces what you are talking about — a very domesticated and subservient role: that they were there to pick up the pieces or to try to prevent certain aggressions and behaviours. What also comes out of the research that we did is that, if the mother is not living in higher levels of poverty, and so on, that will also influence her ability to cope with dysfunctionalism or maladaptive behaviours in the family.

514. **Professor Hamber**: I echo some of those comments. You made the point yourself, and I do not think that the T:BUC strategy has a gendered focus at all. I was surprised when you said that it was mentioned. I read it again early this morning, and the mention of the gender equality strategy did not even stick in my head. To my mind, there was no mention of a gendered analysis, but I may be wrong.

515. There are two points to make. The first is that this often links to some of the definitional issues, such as how we define “sectarianism” or define

the problem. There is a tendency in societies in conflict to define the problem in terms of what is the most visible, which is often direct forms of political violence, such as attacks in some shape or form. We know that men are generally more involved in that. If we turn our gaze towards only the behavioural component of trying to deal with problems, we tend to focus overly on young men and their behavioural problems. In doing that, we miss a whole lot of other dynamics that exist in the community, such as underlying issues of poverty that affect women differently. Their role in the conflict might look different. It is a massive gap.

516. At a more practical level that the Committee could look at, there is a lot of mention of different strategies and activities in the document that are completely gender-blind. For example, it talks routinely about sport. It would be very curious to ask people whom they think that the sport element is aimed at. I would not want to prejudge that. Perhaps it was thought of in a very gender-sensitive way, but I do not really know. However, if you fail to mention that point when making that sort of analysis, there is every chance that the types of programmes that have been advocated are going to be skewed in completely different directions.

517. **Professor Shirlow**: In the type of work that we did, the majority of young people who experienced sectarian violence or antisocial behaviour were males, but the point that we are showing in this work is that it goes back into the home. Whether you are a 16-year-old girl or boy, the environment is the same, because those issues are brought back into the home. How they are dealt with, and the crisis and anger that that creates in the home, will obviously influence how people respond.

518. **Ms Fearon**: We are going to be hearing from different women's groups. Hopefully, we will be able to influence or feed in their feelings, because T:BUC is gender-blind, as you said. There are so many issues that affect women as a result of what we have been through as a society that just get completely forgotten.

519. **Professor Hamber**: It is gender-blind in the failure to mention not only women but the relationship between femininity and masculinity in the types of violence that we see. A more sophisticated analysis could be done of the way in which violence plays itself out once you attach a gendered approach to it.

520. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Brandon, upstairs earlier this afternoon, there was a presentation by one of your colleagues, Dr Catherine O'Rourke, on the impact of the conflict and the role of women.

521. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your presentation. If possible, I would be keen to get a copy of the Northern Ireland Project research. It sounds interesting. What priority do you think OFMDFM gives to addressing sectarianism and segregation?

522. **Professor Hamber**: That is a good question. Wearing my academic hat, I am always tempted to say that I do not have the evidence to say that I know exactly the hours that are given to different topics and policy approaches on different issues. I can answer this only anecdotally. I do not want to belittle the importance of job creation and other issues. However, there is a much higher level of media profile around the types of engagement that OFMDFM and others do on those issues than maybe some of the others. As I said, I feel nervous in saying that because I cannot completely evidence it, but there certainly do not seem to be as many announcements. I know that there were several announcements about T:BUC and others and about the youth strategy and so on and so forth, but, as a regular citizen sitting on the outside, one certainly sees more announcements about a range of other approaches than about issues like sectarianism, social division and segregation. Again, I am happy to be proved wrong.

523. **Professor Shirlow**: OFMDFM has played a role in the research it has commissioned. There is a series of

pieces of research commissioned that show us exactly what the problem is. For example, there is the work that we did in Derry/Londonderry about the Protestant community and how it felt alienated, which has helped to build better relationships in that city. I am sure that you, Brandon, have done work for OFMDFM. The last phase of this family study is a qualitative exercise, and that is being partly sponsored by OFMDFM. There is a big body of work sitting there.

524. I think that one of the problems we still have in this society is how we merge evidence with political practice. If we were sitting here talking about how many tons of iron ore we created or how many litres of milk were produced last year, probably nobody in this room would disagree with us. This is very much about how we build much stronger links between politicians and academic evidence, not because we are sitting here saying that we are somehow superior and that we know these things. Certainly, there is an evidential base that may help in that way, but I think that we do not hear enough from politicians about the difficulty in putting these things into their communities.

525. When Alex talks about knocking on the doors, etc, and hearing things such as, "There's you talking to that so-and-so who did such-and-such", then that type of partisan, street-based anger is still very much there. It is about how we try to merge evidence with your experiences, and we do not really have that in some ways. To an extent, we work in a silo and you work in a silo regarding evidence-bases and political activities. I would be surprised if the OFMDFM research were known by all MLAs. Are they aware of the research that has been done? Maybe that is an issue. How we merge this is very important.

526. Clearly, one of the other problems is that in community and politics, as citizens — or subjects, to use the proper title for us in the UK — we are all part of the process of the transformation of this society. I am not saying that because I am sitting in front of politicians, but, sometimes, it can be too easy to blame them for many of the problems we have in our society. I think that a lot of this has to be about the spirit of wanting society to move forward. Whether you want to stay in the UK or want a united Ireland, what is your responsibility in the transformation of this society? Maybe this is a Utopia, but how we effect this much more strongly in society is very important. Despite the fact that we have a negative peace, and whatever else, I think that this is a much better society. Any of us who have children are certainly living in a much better society than we once did. Maybe the Assembly does not celebrate that enough. Some of the shocks that we have been through in the last few years would have been much worse 20 or 30 years ago.

527. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Peter, when you are commissioned to do research, do you know whether it will be published? If it is to be published, do you follow through to make sure that it is published?

528. **Professor Shirlow**: You would not get research funding unless you said that you were going to publish, so you have to publish as part of the conditions of the research.

529. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, they would never commission private research from you.

530. **Professor Shirlow**: OFMDFM?

531. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes.

532. **Professor Shirlow**: Not that I have experienced.

533. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, it is all published.

534. **Professor Shirlow**: There is a lot of material there that has been very important material.

535. **Professor Hamber**: T:BUC references a number of those documents, the life and times survey and others.

536. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Does either university ever survey elected representatives to see to what extent

these reports are read, studied and acknowledged?

537. **Professor Shirlow**: Probably not, but I think that there is an increasing number of studies that are engaging with political actors about how they feel about peace, change and the Assembly. I think that that has taken place.

538. **Mr Lyttle**: I have one other line of questioning. Dealing with past atrocities and transitional justice are important aspects of building a united community, and I know that you have both worked on those areas. What is your assessment of some of the proposals from the Stormont House Agreement in that context? I think in particular of the online archive that you have worked on.

539. **Professor Shirlow**: Clearly, the landscape is a mess when you consider that we have the whole landscape of victims, including the HET, public inquiries that put the state in the dock — to use that terminology for short hand — the decommissioning of weapons, which makes it difficult to collect forensic evidence and royal prerogatives of mercy. I could go on and on and on.

540. Quite clearly, the response to the victims issue is highly fractured. Obviously, it is constructed around contention. I do not know enough about it, and I do not know what the collection of information is meant to achieve, because I do not think that you could ever have a timeline of the Troubles or the conflict that everybody would agree to. It is too theoretical and ideological to produce that.

541. I still think that, in politicising the conflict in our society, the one thing we missed out on was care for the people who were harmed. I think that the harm caused in this society is colour-blind if we talk about orange and green or others in society. That is the thing that we have missed. We should have been building a society around coping and caring. Much of this is reflected by the fact that many of these families, who are producing kids who behave in this way, are very traumatised by the past.

542. We should have based our whole process on trauma recovery and harm intervention. That can come in many forms, including psychological help, stress relief and even just recognition. We should have become more focused on servicing the needs of victims and people who were harmed in the conflict as opposed to the fractured landscape that we have, which seems to be that one political section gets this and the other political section gets that. That really takes us nowhere.

543. I have observed this: when politicians have been on the television arguing about the past, people have rung me up, or I have had people who I have been doing research with, saying, “I sat last night and cried because, when they are sitting shouting at each other, it just brings it all back to me”. What the person needs is not that. It is about how we take the political and ideological aspects out of the issue. I think that this is the only way that you can progress this society. You can still have your ideological differences about what the conflict was about and about whether there was collusion or whatever the issue is that you want to discuss, but this has to be a human-centred process, which is about giving people the capacity to cope in a changing society that then does not transmit itself. As shown in our study, in the case of people who lost loved ones, that is being transmitted to their children.

544. **Professor Hamber**: From my perspective, not only is there a challenging landscape with respect to dealing with past strategies more widely, which Pete outlined, but there are disparities between the documents now. Obviously, the documents come out at different moments in time. How, for example, does the suggestion about the education programmes advocated in T:BUC interface with the oral history work and other narrative work that the Stormont House Agreement talks about? There is work that needs to be done to knit some of these issues together.

545. You specifically asked me about what we have done in relation to the oral history work. At INCORE at the Ulster University,

we have developed a resource called Accounts of the Conflict, where we have been working with a range of different community groups that have been collecting stories of the conflict. There are well over 30 groups that have been doing that, and we have been recreating an online collection of collections of stories. The infrastructure for this type of an archive has been created at interfaces with the CAIN archive that we run, which is the largest digital repository of information about the conflict anywhere in the world. We feel that, on that specific recommendation, we have done a lot of the groundwork, and we would welcome interfacing with the appropriate body in relation to how the Stormont House Agreement will be timetabled and moved forward.

546. I think that the challenge with that specific recommendation is the same one that we have alluded to the whole way through here, which is that people have certain perspectives. It is unlikely that we will be able to change those and find a common perspective in the short term. So, what can we do so that people can get a better sense of one another's experiences and narratives in a safe and accessible way? If done right, something like the oral history archive and the work we have done at least starts to move down that road. At least you have somewhere where you can start to see a whole range of different experiences which, hopefully, could contribute to the more human view that Pete was advocating.

547. **Mr D McIlveen**: Thank you for your presentation, gentlemen. Obviously, it has been pretty much 20 years since the ceasefires, so, if anybody who — put it this way — is at or below the higher and further education age alleges themselves to be a victim of the Troubles, they are an inherited victim, rather than having suffered direct experience. It is implied, from some of your presentation, that there has been a degree of passing victimhood on to the next generation, which is obviously something that will be quite damaging for us in the future and something we need to deal with.

548. In that context, how has your research developed in looking at us as being exclusive, in our problems? Bear in mind that, if we broaden this out, even to our next-door neighbours or the rest of the United Kingdom, then there are huge antisocial behaviour problems in housing estates and working-class areas in England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. I suppose that our society has not moved on to the extent that it is an issue of black and white, Muslim and Christian or "They are getting everything that we are not, because of their religion". For us, it is more the case that we have remained in our traditional tribes, if I can put it that way. How exclusive are we, as regards 21st-century antisocial behaviour in working-class areas? What is it about our situation that is different to what appears to be happening throughout the rest of the United Kingdom?

549. **Professor Shirlow**: We are still, pretty much, a low-crime society compared with others. That is an issue. Of course, all such crime is reported crime, so we can see only the tip of the iceberg. We know that for every crime that is reported, six or seven similar crimes go unreported. We certainly do not have the same drug-related violence, from what I can gather. With the exception of some wards, we do not have the same volume of violence or reported crime that you would have in some other, similarly deprived communities. So, that is important.

550. One of the things that is really important to understand is that the work that was done in places like Lebanon and maybe South Africa etc shows that a lot of the trauma and the maladaptive behaviours come significantly after conflict ends. You see that with war veterans. When you are involved in a conflict, you have very strong coping strategies, so you have a strong bond with your community. That is what we are up against: the Second World War attitude that we are all in it together. There is very strong community solidarity, to an extent. You

also have a reason for that identity, because you are protecting yourself: "I do not want to be harmed, or I do not want to be a victim of that". Quite clearly, when a conflict ends, those bonds tend to break down, especially over time. The way in which violence brings a community together begins to fracture.

551. The same thing takes place when you take away a factory, as we saw in places such as Dublin or Manchester. With de-industrialisation, community purpose leaves, and there is a growth in drugs, crime and all those things. However, there is very strong evidence that this is happening in other post-conflict societies. When you think that the conflict is over, it actually comes back. That is a part of the ageing process. People of our generation have been through the Troubles. As you get older, you reflect more on your life: "Did I achieve things?". This is when these issues, these episodes in, say, 1972, 1973 or 1974, these things that you and I may have experienced — I am sorry, I do not know what age you are, so I will say things that I may have experienced — come back as you start to reflect on your life, and they can cause traumas because of other things in your life. As you get older, you are maybe more stressed. That is important.

552. Mike Tomlinson's work at Queens was really important. He made a very strong argument regarding suicide in society. Obviously, suicide is a very unfortunate feature of our society. He made the comparison with the suicide rates of our neighbours — the Republic, Wales, Scotland, and England. Their rates have gone down because of better treatment and, to go back to masculinity, because men now talk about things that at one time they would not have talked about etc. Obviously, there is better recording as well. Those suicide rates have gone down, but Mike Tomlinson has shown that our rates have increased, especially among the section of our society who were young adults during the conflict. There are very strong lag effects that will come back at a certain point. It is like the question: "What is the impact of the French Revolution? It is too early to say". What is the impact of the conflict? It is too early to say, because we do not know where the journey is taking us or what the future will be.

553. Certainly, we are different in that we have sectarian crime and not just sectarian crime but sectarian antisocial behaviour, which is very prevalent and is a conditioning factor that does not present in many other societies. Racism in Britain would not necessarily be articulated at Westminster, whereas here people look straight at the Assembly and say, "That is what they are telling us to do" or "They agree with us". This is not necessarily the fault of politicians, but it is how people read the connection between themselves and political leadership and is another slight difference.

554. **Professor Hamber**: I will add a few points. This one is slightly wider than the violence issue. There is some evidence to show that issues can skip a generation in societies that have been through large-scale forms of political conflict. In Latin American countries, such as Argentina and Chile, it is often the grandchildren who are dealing with a lot of the unfinished business of the past. Sometimes their parents might not have got the full story or were maybe too tired as a result of the conflict, and so it is the grandchildren rather than the children who take on the issues. We do not know whether that will happen here, but it is possible.

555. Pete was moving towards issues that are more directly related to mental health. I want to make the same point in relation to crime. This is a relatively low-crime society, but the statistics for suicide and mental health are higher than those for the rest of the UK. I do not have them in front of me, but I have written a paper on the subject that is focused on young people and draws on the work of Mike Tomlinson and others that I am happy to share. The statistics are definitely elevated.

556. Allusion was made to domestic violence. There is certainly anecdotal evidence that domestic violence has increased post conflict, but it is quite hard to research it fully, although I have tried to do so through a number of research projects. There is generally some evidence to show that domestic violence has gone up. Whether that is due to a change in reporting or is a mutation into domestic violence after the conflict, something that Pete alluded to, is difficult to establish academically. There is certainly a lot of research and literature that makes that assertion. We do not know it for a fact here, but, if you were commissioning work, I would say, "Look in the direction of violence in the home".

557. Pete also alluded to young people and sectarian antisocial behaviour or whatever word we would like to use. Pete has talked about this better than me. I imagine — again, I cannot state it unequivocally without the statistics in front of me — that fear of movement, fear of the other community, must be significantly higher here than in other areas, which is not to say that they do not exist in other parts of the United Kingdom.

558. The final issue for us to interrogate — and maybe this is pie in the sky or a bit too large-scale — is the degree to which in segregated communities, where there is less investment and where people are looking inward, their economic opportunities are impacted upon. Again, although I do not think I can verify this scientifically with the papers I have in front of me, there may well be evidence about the economic opportunities for people who are growing up with the legacy of the conflict and their potential to reach out across boundaries and into multicultural societies globally. There is the potential that young people are still being significantly disadvantaged, which is a legacy of the interface of conflict and poverty, conflict and poverty being a lethal mix.

559. **Mr D McIlveen**: Obviously, T:BUC is committed to dealing with the underlying issues, including poverty and that side of things. I have a quick final question, which is not based on any scientific evidence either. Setting mental health to the side, as a serious illness that has to be dealt with, is there a risk that by giving so much attention to a strategy dealing with antisocial behaviour, domestic violence and those types of behaviours, you almost provide a licence for bad behaviour?

560. **Professor Shirlow**: It is the other way round: it is about how you cope and deal with that issue. You would be looking to engage with kids who have been involved in antisocial behaviour. There is an interesting point here, because we sometimes slip into the view that, in these communities, everyone is the same. In these communities, there are also people who are open, tolerant and who wish to build bridges. There are also people who were involved in charities or who have had children with serious illnesses and have had to go and meet groups in west and east Belfast. We ought to remember that there is a lot of really good, positive activity going on in the communities that suffered the greatest loss of life in the Troubles.

561. I remember one time we were doing outreach work with kids who were throwing stones at the emergency services, and, of course, they were being taken here, there and everywhere. Somebody came round to me and said: "It is not fair that they get to go on all the trips, and we get to go nowhere because we are well-behaved." Of course, the kid who is well behaved probably comes from a much more structured home. I do not think that anybody would misbehave and become involved in something like that. These things are already too embedded in their lives.

562. **Professor Hamber**: As far as criminology is concerned, I also do not think that that is the case; but there is a risk that by overly focusing on certain issues, and legislating for them in different ways, you would see an increase in types of behaviours because of the way you define them. If you define low levels of interaction between young people as antisocial behaviour, then it looks like

the focus has increased that form of behaviour, but it is the legislation that has redefined things.

563. **Professor Shirlow**: This reminds me of something that happened in north Belfast. A community activist worked for years to get his next-door neighbour involved in community activity. The next-door neighbour was a plumber, who came home every night and did things with his kids. For years and years he was told: "You should take an interest in your community; you should engage with your community; you should show leadership in your community". "No, I do not want to do that." Then, one night, the community activist was out, only to find that his kids were rioting while the plumber's kids were sitting in the house doing their homework. It goes back to the fact that there are really complex issues in these communities.

564. **Professor Hamber**: The point was made earlier that we need to be careful in our analysis of something like T:BUC. We can be completely in favour of something like the United Youth scheme, but the document is phrased in such a way as to suggest that the scheme is aimed at the 46,000 people who are unemployed. There are a lot of paragraphs before and after about sectarianism and other types of behaviour. There may well be higher levels of certain behaviours in that group, but we do not know that for a fact, and so there is a risk that by targeting different communities we end up stigmatising them, rather than stepping back and taking a wider definition of sectarianism as being something that is embedded right through our society and not necessarily just in specific communities. We have to be quite careful with our phraseology and policy and how the public perceive some of those types of interventions.

565. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Let us finish on that point, because we have to assume that T:BUC will be around for some years to come, not least the strategy to remove walls in ten years. If you could make one suggestion to improve either the vision of the strategy or the route map for achieving it, what would it be?

566. **Professor Shirlow**: We are academics, so this is quite difficult for us.

567. **Professor Hamber**: You go first, Pete.

568. **Professor Shirlow**: I would suggest an evidential base that creates the foundation for T:BUC and therefore guides its aims, objectives and outcomes.

569. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You said that there was a lot of research already.

570. **Professor Shirlow**: That could be incorporated more into —

571. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It needs refined.

572. **Professor Shirlow**: I know that the youth support group is still deliberating on what to do. I would like to see some of the research that has been done. I would like to see that being discussed, at least, and then, hopefully, providing a foundation for the aims, objectives and evaluation.

573. **Professor Hamber**: What I would suggest is at the political level, and I know that this is not easy. Could we agree a set of high-level outcomes that we would like — for example, "We would like to have the peace walls down by 2023"? We should have high-level outcomes, such as that we would like to move towards an integrated education system and x% mixed housing and set dates for those. Then, we should look at the steps needed to get to those points and gear resources towards some of those high-level issues of segregation and separation that the document talks about.

574. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Brandon and Pete, thank you both very much indeed. That was most useful.

4 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Alderman Tom Ekin	*Belfast City Council*
Ms Angela Askin	*Derry City Council*
Ms Sue Divin	

575. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We welcome Alderman Tom Ekin of Belfast City Council: Sue Divin, good relations officer of Derry City Council; and Angela Askin of Derry City Council. Tom, are you making the opening remarks?

576. **Alderman Tom Ekin (Belfast City Council)**: Yes, Chairman, I will make a couple of remarks. I was told to keep it very short, which I will do. I am delighted that the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) has been invited to make a presentation and answer your questions. It reflects the importance of NILGA now with the change of local government. If you want to get clarity of purpose, you speak to NILGA in future. It has taken some time to get here, but I think that all of the councils are buying into it. Thank you very much for inviting us. We have issued you with various responses, therefore there is no point in me reciting them. I assume that you have read them all.

577. We, in local government, realise that we are taking on a lot more responsibilities. We know that it will be a difficult time and that there is a lot of work to be done. It means that not only do the new councils have to work, they have to work in tandem with the other Departments. This is a thing that we have talked about in the past, but it has not really delivered particularly well. That is all that I am saying at this time, except "Can we get the spelling right next time?". I am "Alderman".

578. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The name plate says "Aldeman". Point taken. Sorry about your sign. Is everyone else's OK? Sue and Angela, is there anything that you want to add by way of opening remarks?

579. **Ms Sue Divin (Derry City Council)**: On behalf of Derry City Council community relations team, we are delighted to be here. We are happy to take whatever questions you have. We have a few key points, which we have put in our written submission. We can reiterate those if you want, but, really, we are here to give members the chance to ask us questions about the programme.

580. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I suppose that the first thing we need to establish is what your impression has been since Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) was announced, the degree to which you feel that you were consulted and that your expertise has inputted into the proposal, and how it is planned to implement it.

581. **Alderman Ekin**: I will give my version, and Derry city can then make its comments. This is just another of the five generic statements that have come through over the last 10 years. They are wonderful statements of intent, but nothing seems to back them up.

582. The most recent one was the Stormont House Agreement, where words were written. I accept that they are written, but we found in Belfast that something more substantial needs to be put to it. There needs to be unique leadership, by which I mean single leadership. When I asked the junior Minister, "Who do I speak to about T:BUC in Belfast?", I was given the names of three people to speak to, but I wanted one name; the

name of the most responsible person. Belfast has found that it has been general. There are no specific targets or goals. There is nobody in charge; it is left to the council to find its own way. The other Departments are not necessarily playing a coherent part. That is where Belfast is, broadly. I will leave it to Sue or Angela.

583. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Just for clarity, Tom, are the three people you were told to speak to all departmental officials in OFMDFM?

584. **Alderman Ekin**: The person I spoke to was the Minister, and there were officials in the DOJ, OFMDFM, and somewhere else, I think. When I was given three names, that answered my question. The problem is that we do not have somebody who we can go to and say, "Right, let's coordinate this thing. Let's do it in a businesslike manner". It is a very difficult job to do, but it has to be done.

585. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK, but were the three officials from three separate Departments, as far as you recall?

586. **Alderman Ekin**: I could not say. I was given three names, and two Departments were mentioned.

587. **Ms Divin**: Initially, I think we had some consultative input into T:BUC, but it was probably fairly limited; it was just through the district councils' good relations programme. Overall, we welcome T:BUC. We needed an updated strategic document in place from Stormont, and we are delighted to have finally got that. We are delighted to see that the district councils' good relations programme continues to be included and highlighted in that as a vehicle. A lot of good work has come out of that, but things could be improved in it.

588. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Such as?

589. **Ms Divin**: The key one is the timing of letters of offer. They usually arrive around August or September in a given financial year. The lateness of this prohibits us in strategically planning to deliver the stuff that we need to deliver on the ground. This has been raised for about 10 years by district council good relations officers, but it is getting worse rather than better.

590. **Ms Angela Askin (Derry City Council)**: We are going into a new dispensation with councils. In the past, some local authorities were willing to work at risk to mitigate this and still get the work done. Given the funding climate that we are all experiencing, that is going to be impacted on now, especially over the summer months, where a lot of our work is so necessary in dealing with key issues. It is going to be impacted on even more so if the letters are not out in a timely manner.

591. **Ms Divin**: There is a further impact in not issuing letters of offer at the start of April. Whether there is a big budget or a small one, if the letter is received on 1 April, we can prioritise strategically and deliver our work according to local needs over the year. If it does not come in, then you find that, in local councils, some good relations officers are put on notice on an annual basis. You then have a reasonably high turnover of staff; you have a drain on the expertise of good relations staff working for local councils. It is a vicious circle; it is not improving if people cannot stay in the post, stay committed and build their skills. If we cannot work strategically on things like interfaces, flags, parades and marching, which are the types of issues that come up generally, before we receive a letter of offer from Stormont, it is very difficult for us to function effectively or as effectively as we could.

592. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, timeliness is an issue.

593. One of the themes that is emerging for me is that T:BUC should not try to reinvent the wheel. There is an awful lot of good practice out there already. To what extent do you believe that your members in NILGA have the expertise and capacity to deliver T:BUC?

594. **Alderman Ekin**: In Belfast, we have built up very considerable expertise over the years. The frustration that we

have, and Sue alluded to it, is that this is a long-term project. You have to get the people on the ground to buy into this change to their thinking. Once you have done that, you have to be able to deliver something that satisfies their expectations. We are not achieving that. We have a lot of people in Belfast City Council who meet the people not quite daily but very close to daily. That must apply to all councils, because they are on the ground. They can understand what is going on, but they also know that it will probably be a two- to three-year programme to get people to change their attitudes and open a door. Once you have opened the door, how do you keep it open longer? You cannot do it in a hand-to-mouth exercise as we have been doing. Well, you can do it, but it is very unsatisfactory. Long-term financial planning is one of the keys to it.

595. **Ms Divin**: In response to the question on whether we have the capacity, I will say that it is important that Committee members are aware that there is quite a wide variation in how the various local councils apply their good relations practices on the ground. It depends on a number of things. One is whether you have staff in post who have been there for a while or, even if they are new, who have brought relevant experience. There is no doubt that good relations is built on building relations with local communities and understanding the context on the ground. So, that is a big issue.

596. The other factor that influences it, in my professional opinion, is how the managers in each district council react to good relations: whether proactive, creative, innovative good relations work is encouraged, as it is in our council; and whether it is supported by all political parties, which it is in our local council. If it is, the officers in the posts know that they can go ahead, take risks and work innovatively with local communities and use their initiative. We have the capacity in our council, but there is an extreme variation across district councils.

597. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Tom, we have already heard your point that this type of longitudinal approach is very important. We heard of communities being brought together and then, when there is a kind of a seismic shock because of an event — the example used was the flags protest — the two communities immediately sprung back into their own bolt-holes, but, because the work had built up sufficient momentum, people decided, "Actually, we are not going to let this external event put us off. We are going to get back together". So, you need that time to be able to get over events, dear boy.

598. The other thing I am interested in is this: does best practice suggest that you will not bring people together by saying to them, "You are different, so you need to come together and work"? Is best practice actually saying to them, "You have a lot in common"? One of the examples we were given was this, "You all want to be better parents, so let us get together and talk about how we can be better parents", and you do not even mention the fact that they have a difference.

599. **Alderman Ekin**: I certainly agree with that. It is like a lot of big change. You have to sell to your audience the benefits of being different. It applies to anything. If you are going to create a discomfort for folks, you have to say to them, "You could do this. You could do that. Do you realise, for example, that your job opportunities, are diminished by your being beside a peace wall?" The Ulster University is doing a study on that and hopes to produce a report shortly to spell it out. However, we know from years gone by that it costs £1·5 billion or £1 billion it does not matter which figure it is as both are valid to keep us separated. Part of that is the peace walls, duplicating services and so on. You could be saying to people, "You can have 10% of that, £100 million, to spend on other things to help you to get jobs and training." It is a long-term thing. They have laughed at me saying this for years, but I will keep saying it because it is true. You have to keep selling to people the virtues of why a change

should happen and get them to say, "We want the change." It is doable.

600. The other evening, Belfast City Council passed a resolution, which might come across your desk at some stage, to ask OFMDFM what has been the result so far of the programme of breaking down the peace walls. We are three years or something into the programme of removing peace walls by 2023. Where have we got to on that? Nobody really knows. Belfast City Council has proposed a motion, which will go back to one of the committees, and will be writing a letter to OFMDFM to ask, "How much progress have we made?" The corollary will be, "What more do we have to do to make it happen faster?"

601. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Tom is saying that we do not know how far we have come in that programme. That makes me wonder: what is the relationship like between good relations officers at council level and the Department? You have talked about the letters of offer, but, more generally, what is the communication flow like?

602. **Ms Askin**: It is reasonably good. We get good support from the OFMDFM officials who are in charge of the programme. It probably could be better in getting good relations officers together to share best practice on a more regular basis. There used to be a two-day conference, then it went down to one day, and now it is a half day. So, that could probably be better. However, I would say that the support from the officials is reasonable.

603. **Ms Divin**: We know them by name. We can lift the phone and ring them or email them, and they will reply.

604. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is the sharing of best practice an area that is ripe for improvement?

605. **Ms Askin**: I think so. There are some really good local projects going on. If it works in one area, that is not to say that it will work in every area. However, it is certainly worth having a look at it and seeing if it could be replicated.

606. On your original point about bringing people together because they are different, I would say that it would probably be best practice to bring them together for a reason rather than just for being different. An example that we use all the time in training is Tesco. It brings everyone together all the time to do their shopping, but they are not actually interacting. They are turning up at the one place all the time and passing one another like ships in the night. Rather than just bringing them together, we bring them together to try to get them to talk, interact and communicate more.

607. **Ms Divin**: You need to do both work on finding common goals and other commonalities and work that looks at differences and explores those constructively. The key difference that we have found in Derry/Londonderry is that people generally realise that difference is not a threat and can be a positive thing for our city and district. The most commonly cited example of that is the Londonderry bands forum and the All-Ireland Fleadh.

608. **Alderman Ekin**: I listened to the ladies talking earlier. One of the problems with some of these meetings is that staff turnover is such that, as new community relations officers (CROs) and new Civil Service folks come in, you are starting off from scratch every time. That is wasting time to a considerable extent. You have to start building on the existing knowledge and make sure that you keep the teams together.

609. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I feel compelled to say that other supermarkets are available. *[Laughter.]*

610. **Mr Moutray**: You are very welcome. The Chair touched on a point about sharing experiences. The constituency that I represent encompasses Craigavon and Banbridge, and the issues in the two councils are very different. Surely there should be a more organised and regular sharing of experiences. Sue, I think that it was you who said that what is fed out at the bottom depends on how proactive the council's senior management are.

611. **Ms Divin**: It can; yes.

612. **Mr Moutray**: Surely sharing your experiences is beneficial and should be encouraged.

613. **Ms Divin**: In the annual report to OFMDFM, each council is required to list examples of its best practice throughout the year. However, to my knowledge, that has never been shared across councils. There is useful information sitting there. Genuinely, when CROs need to, they tend to lift the phone to one another and find ideas of best practice. However, there are not formal structures for sharing that. It is not just within the district council's good relations programme. Our council runs considerable programmes with primary and post-primary schools. The education board rarely says, "Let us look at what you are doing." Although we work at a local level with teachers and people from the education board, we are never asked to input into the educational stuff in T:BUC. There is almost an assumption that councils just give out grants. The whole breadth of what we do is not tackled or looked at.

614. **Mr Moutray**: But it would be beneficial.

615. **Ms Divin**: I think that it would; yes.

616. **Ms McGahan**: No community relations funding was used in the distribution of grants at Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council. What do you believe to be the pros and cons of that?

617. **Ms Divin**: Of giving out good relations grant aid?

618. **Ms McGahan**: Yes.

619. **Ms Divin**: We have tried a number of systems over the years, but grant aid is a key part of what we do, not so much in terms of workload but financially. Derry City Council usually gives out around £150,000 in grants. It is a very competitive programme. We can fund only about 50% of the applications, and this year we will have to cut that programme quite significantly in the current context. So, many good projects are being turned away, but we have an open and transparent application system — a public advertisement, and a scoring panel — and we think that that it is important.

620. **Ms McGahan**: I notice that, in my constituency, no community relations funding was used in the distribution of grants. The figure is sitting at zero, so it has obviously gone somewhere else. I am trying to work out the pros and cons of that.

621. **Ms Divin**: In terms of programme versus grant aid?

622. **Ms McGahan**: OK, yes.

623. **Ms Divin**: We have a bit of a balance. There is certainly merit in putting money out to groups on the ground that identify local needs that meet good relations conditions. However, we say that it is also important that the officers also have programme budgets. We put money into mainstreaming good relations through Derry City Council services: therefore, we look at good relations through our leisure centres, sports, heritage, museums and all of that. We also do a lot of training programmes. If we see something that we think many people in the community would benefit from, such as a load of people needing mediation or media training, or whatever it is, we will run courses. Our schools programmes are all part of what we do directly.

624. **Ms Askin**: The pros for grant aid include that it is like mainstreaming good relations through community associations. They have the contacts in and relationships throughout their community, and they can probably attract a wider audience than, perhaps, could we. So, it is also definitely positive in getting the good relations' message out wider than we possibly could.

625. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What impact does time-limited funding have on your ability to deliver effectively? What I mean is that you may apply for and get grants for 12 or 18 months, three years would probably be the longest that you would get them, but the issues will be around for a lot longer.

626. **Ms Divin**: At the minute, one year is the longest that we get funding under this programme; it is on an annual cycle. We would very much welcome it being on a two- or three-year cycle. That would make a massive difference in the strategic impact on the ground.

627. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: From my work in the public sector, on the victims' side of things, it seems to me that you would make a case, and, if successful, you would get funding. You would maybe then employ somebody to deliver a service. If you were playing snakes and ladders, you would take the people you were serving up a nice ladder to a better place. However, as the funding runs out and there is uncertainty about whether it will be renewed, your key worker might see a job in the statutory sector and leave, and the programme would collapse.

628. The people would then hit the big snake and be worse off, because they now know that there was a better place but that the funding was not available to keep them there. Could funding be open-ended? Once you have proved the need, could government say, "Your funding is going to be open-ended. Obviously, we are going to monitor it and we want to see impacts, but rather than have you reapply and reapply, we will monitor it, and, if we reach a point where we think that this need has been met, we will give you notice that funding will stop."?

629. **Alderman Ekin**: I can see what you are getting at.

630. I think it is doable under the following circumstances: if a lump sum of money were made available to a council for community relations over three years, and that council was able to say, within that period and for each year therein, "These are the programmes that we are going to fund". It would then be given the responsibility to use the funds properly, reporting against targets and making sure that there is the continuity that you referred to. A point that is hard to carry out is that the council must also have the responsibility to make sure that it cuts a programme, once started. So, it is doable, but I do not know how government finance would accept a three-year commitment of £1 million a year to this council, that council or whatever.

631. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We commit to a National Health Service because we know that we will need acute hospitals, GPs, nurses and all the rest. Sectarianism is not going to be cured in 12 months.

632. **Alderman Ekin**: We know that. We treat it as much less than 12 months, as you have heard from Sue and Angela. You are given two months to do something. That is the slowness of the process.

633. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes, and the letter of offer becomes even more of an issue because it becomes an annual process.

634. **Ms Askin**: It also makes it difficult to do strategic or progressive work. If you are starting at a low base with groups, you would like to move it forward and progress it year-on-year. If you are only getting your letter of offer on an annual basis, it is very difficult to keep that progression going and keep those relationships live.

635. **Ms Divin**: District councils tend to get the flak when other good relations-related funding cycles close and start. For example, when one round of Peace funding closes and there is a six- or nine-month gap until the next one, everybody looks at the council to fulfil all that. We are hitting the same thing at the minute with the IFI peace walls programme. So, yes.

636. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your presentation. You are very welcome. Is it possible to give a brief example of one best practice piece of community relations work?

637. **Ms Divin**: One? Is there any particular type of work that you are interested in hearing about?

638. **Mr Lyttle**: Maybe something in relation to interfaces, for example.

639. **Alderman Ekin**: There are a lot of exercises going on in Belfast. I am not

saying that it is good practice but it is standard practice.

640. You have to engage with people. As soon as you see a glimmer of people saying, "We want to be different", you have to help them and support them in that. That is happening at Alexandra Park, for example. OK, it is the only park in the world with a peace wall across it, but they have opened a door in it and you have to give them the courage to do that. You put the funding in place. It is done. There is a lot of mischief-making outside, with people saying that there is rioting there every night and that it is criminal to have opened it up. That is mischief. That is wrong. We have tried to stop that. That is coming from some councillors, and it appals me that they say those things.

641. The good practice there has been to listen to what the people are saying, take the idea and ask, "What can we do to help you to get there?" When they get there, you know that there will be a problem and the good practice then is to help them at the time of the problem and ask, "What can we do as the next step?" Maybe you have to take a step back. That is not a problem as long as you know that you are taking a step back for the right reasons, which is what they had to do. The city council worked very closely with those folks over time without putting undue pressure on them but still saying, "Your goal is to make Alexandra Park a normal place". The other good thing is that you get people who are prepared to come forward and say, "That gate was open. Do you know what it does? It allows me to get to Tesco without having to get a bus or a taxi. I can walk".

642. **Mr Lyttle**: And other supermarkets.

643. **Alderman Ekin**: There are other supermarkets; I realise that. Tesco needs help.

644. **Ms Divin**: From a Derry/Londonderry perspective, I would say that you cannot tackle an interface by just looking at the wall. That is the first key thing. There are a number of things that we do in relation to that, most critically the interface monitoring forum in Derry/Londonderry, which, on a monthly or bimonthly basis, as needed, brings together statutory agencies, the PSNI, the Youth Justice Agency and the council along with key community workers from all sides of our three interfaces and we sit round a table and talk about the issues. That work has progressed over the years to the point that, at the last Maiden City Festival celebrations, we found ourselves talking about where the Portaloos would be in the city and about the police reporting on a carnival atmosphere. If you wind things back five or six years, it would have been a very different meeting.

645. Building relationships and sustaining the structures and the relationships is important in the long term. Equally, the IFI peace walls programme has made a massive impact in Derry/Londonderry because it paid for part-time workers to be based on each side of our interfaces. Having those workers on the ground was critical. Equally, we have a programme on bonfires and alternatives to bonfires so that communities that have, do not have or are doing away with bonfires can equally benefit. That brings a lot of our interface communities together on incentive-based training programmes and helps us build relationships with them so that they know us if they need to lift the phone. We also give diversionary money. A sum of £500 can make a massive difference to a community group or a youth group that works on either side of an interface in trying to keep young people involved in something positive rather than getting sidetracked into something negative.

646. **Ms Askin**: With shared spaces, and what are considered to be shared spaces, we do very practical things like getting a group of people on a bus and taking them into areas where they would not normally go, opening up areas to them and making them see that they are grand.

647. In the UK City of Culture year, we had a couple of new shared spaces — at the time, they were not considered to be shared spaces — like the Ebrington

site and Guildhall Square, which were part of the public realm scheme. The programming, such as the Radio 1 Big Weekend, allowed people to go to Ebrington for a reason, and it is now considered to be a totally shared space. It is about pushing the boundaries of what is seen as a shared space and trying to make them more accessible to everybody.

648. **Mr Lyttle**: You are leading me on to a question that I am reluctant to ask, but, if I am not wrong, the T:BUC strategy sets the aim of all public space being shared space. What is OFMDFM doing to work with you to ensure that that aim is achieved?

649. **Ms Divin**: It is providing money under the district council good relations programme so that we can work with local communities.

650. **Mr Lyttle**: How is it monitoring or evaluating the outcomes of that investment to ensure that it is achieving the aims that it has set out in the strategy?

651. **Ms Divin**: I can comment on how we have to report on that. Every action plan is outcomes-based so you have to look at the target that you are aiming for and then work backwards from that as to what you will do and what OFMDFM does with the information that we send up. We submit quarterly progress reports to OFMDFM. I do not know whether those are collated, but it checks on an individual basis that a council is doing something constructive.

652. **Mr Lyttle**: What does OFMDFM do to bring district council good relations officers together to share practice or to consult on ideas?

653. **Ms Askin**: It brings us together annually for a conference.

654. **Mr Lyttle**: Is that a half-day conference?

655. **Ms Askin**: Yes. When the T:BUC consultation came out, for example, it brought us together, and our views were fed in. If there is any critical legislation that is pertinent to good relations, it brings us together.

656. **Ms Divin**: Before the RPA, OFMDFM advised that we should work in regional groupings. Derry City Council was part of the northern forum of good relations officers, along with Coleraine, Ballymoney, Moyle and Limavady. We shared good practice informally in our slightly wider areas. That does not really exist now because of the RPA, but it existed previously.

657. **Mr Lyttle**: What is the typical budget that OFMDFM gives to a council for good relations work?

658. **Ms Divin**: There is not a typical budget, unless you ask OFMDFM what the average is. Until now, it was based on the quality of your work, and you submitted a competitive bid, which was scored. If you scored very highly, you tended to get 100% of your funding. If you did not score highly, you did not get everything that you asked for. Our understanding is that that has changed, and we are concerned about that. It is no longer competitive to the same extent. When you apply this time round under the new council structures, it is either a pass or a fail, and, if you pass, the money is not based on quality but on per capita spend. Derry City Council has some concerns that, as it is a more deprived area of Northern Ireland, that disadvantages us, and we would expect quite a significant budget hit.

659. **Mr Lyttle**: What was your budget for last year?

660. **Ms Divin**: It was half a million pounds.

661. **Mr Lyttle**: With the letters of offer, am I right in saying that August/September was an early date of receipt for some of the last financial years?

662. **Ms Divin**: It is probably around average.

663. **Mr Lyttle**: Are there instances when it has been almost halfway through a year before people receive letters of offer?

664. **Ms Divin**: Yes.

665. **Mr Lyttle**: Is it an annual budget?

666. **Ms Divin**: Yes.

667. **Mr Lyttle**: How can anybody operate in those circumstances?

668. **Ms Divin**: We would be delighted if you could help us to answer that question.

669. **Mr Lyttle**: That is obviously a serious problem.

670. What involvement did OFMDFM have with the district councils in setting the good relations indicators? Have you had any update on the outcome of the review?

671. **Ms Divin**: We were asked to send one or two representatives to meetings in Stormont to discuss those indicators. We had input about it not being so Belfast-centric, bearing in mind rural areas and so on. So we had input, which we welcomed Three or four good relations officers from different parts of Northern Ireland were involved in that process.

672. **Ms Askin**: The indicators were communicated to us once they were finalised.

673. **Mr Lyttle**: Do you think that they are in line with the types of outcomes that we are seeking to achieve, or is there work to be done?

674. **Ms Divin**: I think that they are very high level for us to be able to measure at a local level without employing researchers. We tend to do our own consultation and write our own action plans and strategies because that works for people on the ground. That also means that we do not spend money on consultants. It would be very difficult for councils to measure those indicators, because it requires university level analysis.

675. **Mr Lyttle**: The issue with the letters of offer is astounding, in that, when councils are given an annual budget, they know only halfway through the year what they will receive to do that work.

676. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have made it clear that, when a Peace programme wraps up, groups understandably put pressure on you. What about when a Peace programme is open? Is there attention at that point? How do you make an assessment when there is this cocktail, as it were, with money coming from the Department, the CRC, Peace money and philanthropy money? How does it work for you?

677. **Ms Askin**: With Peace money, we would have ensured that there was complementarity with what we were delivering versus what Peace III was delivering. Locally, it worked very well for us. We were invited to sit on their partnerships and attend their meetings. We were asked for expertise on projects that they were establishing.

678. We are aware of areas where it did not work so well, and there were issues between both funds. For us, however, it worked pretty well. We tried to ensure that there was always complementarity and good relations. When it is operating well, it is brilliant, and loads of money is flying about, but, when the money starts to dry up, they want a house somewhere for the good work that was initiated under Peace. That is when they tend to look to the statutory sector.

679. **Ms Divin**: I will add to that, linking in with Bronwyn McGahan's question about the value of putting money into grant aid versus programmes. When Peace or another funding programme opens up a lot of money to the community and voluntary sector, very often the expertise of councils' good relations teams is called in to sit on steering groups for those projects. That adds to our workload but also shows the value of a district council good relations programme that employs staff.

680. **Alderman Ekin**: There is always a problem in matching the sources of funds. The IFI does one thing, the SEUPB does something else, and Belfast City Council had a certain amount of money to do things. One of the problems is that the availability of this funding is never coterminous and does not start at the same time.

681. We have had the odd problem when we have said, "If I have money, it is there, and it has to do a certain thing". That is to help people and communities to develop, but to develop to what? You need physical cash to come in later

on to do whatever physical work has to be done, and that is not necessarily available. You are asked whether you want to take IFI money to do that, not knowing where the next step will be. It is important that we know the next step.

682. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So you spend a lot of time chasing money.

683. **Alderman Ekin**: Yes.

684. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You spend a lot of time accounting for the use of money, and you probably spend a lot of time shaping your strategies to tick the boxes.

685. **Ms Divin**: In fairness, we also spend a lot of time doing practical and policy work, and our jobs are just quite busy.

686. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Fair enough.

687. **Mr Spratt**: Thank you for the presentation. Good to see you, Tom. Community planning will now be a big issue for councils. Community engagement is obviously a vital part of community planning. I notice that Belfast has done an online survey of residents, and Mid Ulster has conducted a series of town hall-style meetings in different towns. Is that being run out across the Province for some of the issues that you are dealing with? Is Derry City Council doing anything about that?

688. **Ms Askin**: Different approaches are being taken to community planning across the Province, but, in Derry City and Strabane District Council, the town hall information sessions were rolled out last week and continue this week across the district. There will be 12 such sessions, and the chief executive is leading on them, with input from consultants. Staff are also very much involved. There is a three-pronged approach: letting the public know about the new dispensation and what will happen; what community planning means for communities; and how they can impact the new community planning, how it will be shaped and developed and what it will look like at a local level.

689. **Ms Divin**: There is a household survey, backed up by NISRA, of 1,400 households in the area and of section 75 groups.

690. **Mr Spratt**: That will play into your work as well.

691. **Ms Divin**: Some of it will but not all of it directly.

692. **Ms Askin**: Enumerators are being employed locally to do the surveys through Ilex.

693. **Ms Divin**: That will also be done through community groups on the ground. There will be trained enumerators.

694. **Mr Spratt**: We have heard about budget issues and all the rest of it, and the problem of having only a yearly budget happens right across the board. Departments and so on get only a yearly budget, and that is obviously something to do with Treasury rules. Local government, from a rating point of view, also gets its budget only on a yearly basis. Tom, you said that NILGA has been doing a good job, and I agree with you. Over the years, NILGA has done a very good job in making presentations. It did a good job in the run-up to the legislation for the new councils in lobbying across the board. Perhaps it could be stronger, and could be made stronger in the future, on some budget issues and the day-to-day workings of what we were talking about. Do you see a major role for NILGA in lobbying at Stormont? It attended regularly in the run-up to the legislation for local government reform.

695. **Alderman Ekin**: Thank you. It is gratifying that somebody other than NILGA is saying that we are doing a reasonable job. Remember that NILGA has been going through a transformation for the last few years, and the major issue now is how we are going to get a coherent view from 26 councils — down to 11 — to get them to work and how we are going to ensure that government delivers what it said it was going to deliver to the councils. Let us take the transfer of functions being rates-neutral. That did not happen, but we fought very hard to try to get

all the councils to agree what we were trying to take on board and to be willing to take on the new responsibilities. Some of them did not want to take on those responsibilities. In a couple of months' time, it will have happened, and I entirely agree that the councils are now buying into NILGA more. They will be using NILGA as a conduit, which is why I was quite pleased that the Committee invited us here today. This is another step in putting responsibility on NILGA to come up with coherent views that are persuasive and that all the councils in the Province can buy into so that there is one view so that you do not have to go and listen to 26 or 11 different people. You are listening to one spokesperson. I certainly see NILGA expanding its role and influence.

696. **Mr Attwood**: From what you have said so far, quite a number of recommendations could go forward to any final report. I have only one question. You talked about uncertainty of funding and delays in getting confirmed offers of funding. Can you scope out for us as best you can what you think that the profile will be of budgetary pressures, with the rundown of Peace, with whatever happens with the IFI interface project moneys that you referred to and with budgetary pressures in government and so on? Can you anticipate now what the squeeze could be year on year over the next number of years — let us say in the life of the current council term? Is that too speculative? If our report is to be rigorous, we have to advise government on the financial profile, including what the needs might be and what might fall to government in this situation, bearing in mind that the Institute for Fiscal Studies today published a report indicating that further Budget pressures will be very significant, including for devolved administrations post 2015-16. Are you able to do that? I am not quite asking you to speculate but to give your best assessment of what your pressures will be.

697. **Alderman Ekin**: I will answer speculatively from a higher level, because I am not on the ground, as these ladies are. If you were starting this as a project, you would spell out your end result: where are you trying to get to? Nobody has spelled out just what we are trying to achieve. Indeed, we talk about a shared future, but it often ends up with people creating things that make it a divided future. You have to get people to say coherently, "Right, we are going to share the future, and that means getting rid of peace walls and working with people on the ground". This is how we need to bring people forward so that they are comfortable with their neighbour. There are also wonderful savings sitting there: it costs £1 billion a year to keep us separate. How do we find, say, £5 million a year? Is there some way that the Minister of Finance can say, "We can get £5 million a year, and, come hell or high water, we will set it aside for the next five years, and that is what will be spent over the Province". You could then go to the 11 councils and say, "Look, you have a certain issue". I am sure that somebody has already done the research on the major pressure points.

698. You were talking about areas of deprivation. I heard the other day that ISIS comes from deprivation. Now I do not want there to be an ISIS in Northern Ireland. You have to address the issues in those deprived areas and bring in social and economic investment and a whole heap of other things. Somebody has to start thinking their way through that and ask how much money we need. If, however, you are given only a few million quid, you then ask how you will spend it. The pressure will be felt by people at the coalface — Angela and Sue. If you were to cut their budget by 50% or 20%, they will have to juggle that and carry on doing what they are doing. Maybe you could expand on that.

699. **Ms Divin**: I will start, and you can add anything. We have already had these conversations. We lost 18% of our budget at the start of September last year. So our key message to you — we have articulated it before — is this: tell us what our budget is on 1 April,

because then, whatever the budget is, we are able to plan strategically to work within it. Our style of working may change. Communities come to councils asking to work in partnership in order to get grant aid. Soon, we may be saying to them: "We have no money. However, let me come out and work with your community group at this interface or in that housing estate or in that sports club". We will work with them in kind and help them to fill in forms to get funding from Comic Relief, Children in Need or wherever we can get it. Indeed, we are already doing some of that. If we have less money ourselves, our resource, as people who understand good relations effectively on the ground, becomes even more important. That is the key issue.

700. We already work on a shoestring budget. The scale of funding for things like Peace III puts ours into perspective. We work on a shoestring delivering projects. Cutting that further effectively means cutting our direct delivery under our action plan. Either you cut all our grant aid or you cut all our other programmes, such as training and schools programmes, community festivals, black and minority ethnic work and our interface diversionary fund. That could all go, or you halve both and try for some kind of balance. That is how significant the funding cuts are. This coming financial year, we do not know whether we will have any money to spend after we have given out grant aid. We do not know whether we will have any programmes money at all for our officers to work from. That is the worst-case scenario, but it is not impossible. We are already looking at those kinds of things.

701. **Ms Askin**: We have heard that Peace IV may be in the pipeline, and that might relieve the pressure, although there will be a significant gap. The IFI is done: it is gone. The only other thing is philanthropic funding. As Sue stated, it is scary.

702. **Ms Divin**: Another key impact of those funders going out of existence is that the people who are employed in the community and voluntary sector end up not having those jobs. I cannot stress how important those jobs are to our sector. Derry City Council's good relations team could not do half the work it does if we did not have people working on the ground in communities. You can rely too heavily on volunteers who are trying to juggle family and work while doing all this. It is impossible for them to do it. Our city and district have moved forward, but that is partly because we have a very progressive community and voluntary sector that is willing to engage with these issues and work with us. If they go, we are handcuffed in what we can do.

703. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Sue, you mentioned NISRA, and my final question is about NISRA's evaluation of the district council good relations programme. I think that it was completed in 2012, but the recommendations have not been implemented.

704. **Ms Divin**: That is my understanding.

705. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you know when the recommendations will be implemented?

706. **Ms Divin**: No, I do not, but I am familiar with some of the key points, such as the timeliness of the letters of offer and things like that, which were raised then. We would love to see many of those recommendations being looked at.

707. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That has been most useful. Thank you very much indeed. Still feeling bad about the supermarkets. Clearly, from what you say, Sue, a Lidl goes a long way, but we are not yet at the point at which we can ask, "Asda programme worked?". Sue, Angela and Aldi-man Tom, thank you very much indeed. We look forward to Sparing with you in the future. *[Laughter.]*

708. **Mr Spratt**: We will be back after this short break.

709. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The weather is next.

710. **Mr Lyttle**: He misses it.

711. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I have just had an image of Frank Mitchell. I am not well.

4 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Ms Jackie Patton	*Mid and East Antrim Council*
Ms Karen Smyth Ms Mary Kerr	*Northern Ireland Local Government Association*

712. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: With us are Karen Smyth, the head of policy at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), Jackie Patton, a council officer for Mid and East Antrim, one of the new super-councils, and Mary Kerr, the housing policy and research manager for the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations. You are very welcome. Karen, you are in the middle, so are you opening?

713. **Ms Karen Smyth (Northern Ireland Local Government Association)**: Yes. Thank you very much for the invitation to attend and for your interest in community planning. This is obviously very new for Northern Ireland, and councils are making the necessary practical arrangements to do all they can to ensure that community planning is successful. I have provided you with some background information in your briefing and want to take a brief opportunity to expand on some points.

714. Although the primary legislation is in place for community planning, we are still waiting on some subordinate legislation and statutory guidance to enable councils and their community planning partners to move forward with more certainty. A consultation about statutory partners closed on 12 December, and we are in the process of responding to a consultation on statutory guidance, which closes on 9 March. In November, councils and a number of relevant organisations were given a brief opportunity to comment on the draft guidance as part of a pre-consultation exercise. One of the issues arising from that pre-consultation was a weakness in the documents in the areas of equality and good relations, which was addressed prior to publication of the finalised consultation. We know that DOE officials were in contact with the Committee on the Administration of Justice, the Community Relations Council, the Equality Commission and OFMDFM to explore that issue and assist in developing the guidance in that regard. It might be useful for the Committee to examine the consultation as it stands to assess whether you wish to make any suggestions as to content. I know that other Assembly Committees are keeping a close eye on the progress of community planning to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities it presents and have requested sight of that draft guidance document.

715. I also suggest that the Committee encourages the Department to liaise with the DOE local government division to establish whether it should send an attendee to the DOE community planning working group, which meets regularly. I know that DOE is looking at strengthening links with Departments that are not transferring functions within local government reform, and I respectfully suggest that, given OFMDFM's remit for equality and good relations, it should engage with the work at that level.

716. New councils have recently appointed community planning officers, such as Jackie, who are working closely with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in a phase of building

an evidence base for decisions that will need to be taken after 1 April 2015.

717. I have also requested that Mary Kerr from the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership joins us today, as that partnership, which also includes councillor members, has been very active in assisting in the evidence building exercise, and has produced a document focusing on community profiles for the new local government districts, particularly in relation to migrants. That community profiles document, which I think you have a summary of, is designed to support councils and their partners to engage with, plan for and deliver to communities that are becoming much more diverse, and, hopefully, to assist us all to maximise the potential within our communities. I have a copy of the full document for the Chair, should you wish to have a look at it. We are happy to take any questions.

718. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you very much. That was most useful. In your briefing paper you referred to the political partnership panel, which was set up and met in December, and, actually, was due to meet for the second time yesterday.

719. **Ms Smyth**: It did, yes.

720. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, how did that go?

721. **Ms Smyth**: It went very well, by all reports. There were five of the Executive Ministers there, including Minister Hamilton, and there was obviously a huge desire on behalf of councillor members to have a discussion about finance, to begin discussions on community planning and to develop a work programme for that partnership panel.

722. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you know which other four Ministers attended?

723. **Ms Smyth**: Off the top of my head, Minister Durkan chaired the meeting, we had Minister Wells, Minister Storey and there was one other — I am trying to remember who it was — but none of the OFMDFM Ministers attended. Obviously, Minister Hamilton was the other one.

724. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you think it has the potential to be a very useful cross-cutting tool?

725. **Ms Smyth**: We have a lot of hope for it and indications are good at the moment. Obviously, it needs to show results quickly. We need some quick wins from it. We have already managed to have a good outcome in relation to a problem that the sector had with the code of conduct, in the fact that it was too onerous on members and was actually anti-democratic in some ways, limiting their ability to speak about things. It is early days, and we anticipate that it will become substantive over time, particularly in the run-up to the next Programme for Government. We would like to see complementarity between what local government is doing and what central government is doing.

726. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If you read the Smith Commission post the Scottish independence vote, or, indeed, the Command Paper on further devolution for the English regions that has come out of Westminster, you can see a consistent direction of travel that power should be devolved away from Westminster, out of Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, down to council and community level. Do you agree that perhaps the best thing for Stormont to do is set the vision, which might be a shared future, but then to devolve the actual mechanisms for delivering it to councils? Because how you might deliver it in Larne may be different from how you are going to do it in Dungiven or in east Belfast. Indeed, how you do it on the lower Newtownards Road may be different from how you want to do it on the Upper Newtownards Road.

727. **Ms Smyth**: I certainly agree with that direction of travel. Community engagement, as already highlighted, is a fundamentally important part of the new community planning process. We are working with voluntary and community sector partners, to build their capacity, as well as the capacity of our elected

members and staff in councils, to get things working as they should and normalise the situation here. Delivering that shared future is an important part of what we are trying to do.

728. I want to bring Jackie in. She was a good relations officer in Ballymena for a long time and has transferred to community planning. This is very much her area of work.

729. **Ms Jackie Patton (Mid and East Antrim Council)**: Indeed. Chairman, thank you and the Committee for the invitation. I worked for Ballymena Borough Council since 1991 as a good relations officer — so quite a while. I have now taken the opportunity to work for Mid and East Antrim District Council on community planning, on a secondment basis.

730. My experience would suggest that all of the work is about civic leadership. It is about making sure that we have key people at the head of all the organisations. In Mid and East Antrim District Council, we are fortunate in that we have an excellent chief executive, Anne Donaghy, who is very much behind good relations and community planning, as are our senior management team and our councillors.

731. I have worked very closely with Sue and Angela over the years and, as has been said, it is about relationship building and making sure that we have those relationships. A lot of the discussion today has been about grants. In Ballymena council, our grant aid was something like £10,000 per year or £300 per group. It was a competitive process, and it was only for £300, yet a great amount of work was done. Again, it was about the staff getting involved in the committees at a grass-roots level.

732. In the Ballymena borough we have Harryville, Broughshane and a vibrant ethic minority population, who we worked with in the early 2000s to create an inter-ethnic forum that has gone from strength to strength. David, I am sure that you will agree with that. You come to an awful lot of our events, and we are very fortunate in that.

733. So, the work is time-bound, and it is about grasping the opportunities that you have through the Peace funding. A lot of it is about people working together and creating a great capacity in their area. The area that I represent has been very fortunate to have that.

734. **Ms Smyth**: To build on that and to come back to your point, the ability of local government to work locally is incredibly important, and Tom was very clear on the importance of that sort of bottom-up approach. Although we need the strategy to be set at a central level, it also needs to be fed by what happens at ground level. So, that reciprocal relationship is incredibly important and can be worked out through the community planning process and hopefully and eventually through the partnership panel.

735. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Mary, I want to bring you in. Your role is in housing policy and research. What sort of patterns are emerging?

736. **Ms Mary Kerr (Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership)**: It is. Sorry — to clarify, I am with the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership. When you introduced me as having responsibility of housing, I was just getting installed and misheard.

737. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Sorry, the error is on our side. I withdraw that question. Will you repeat your function?

738. **Ms Kerr**: I am with the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership. I am the policy officer there. We are one of the 11 partnerships across the UK that are funded by the Home Office.

739. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. How well do you think that your area is understood at a local government level?

740. **Ms Kerr**: It is becoming better understood. To date, we have been working very much at a regional level. We are relatively recently established partnership and have been in place for about three years. This issue is coming more to the fore in local government, particularly with regard to the new functions of community planning, and

is bringing governance closer to the people. There is also a recognition that "the people" are a much more diverse representation than previously was the case.

741. That is really why we developed the profiles. We were working at a regional level, and we realised that there was a need to work more at a local government level. Initial conversations, principally with good relations officers, showed that they did not have the data and did not know what their demographics were. That is why we developed the profiles for each of the new 11 councils to show them exactly who was living within their government boundaries, what kind of diversity they have, what languages are spoken and what pressures and possible pressures will be put on different services etc. So it will inform them, not just with the engagement aspect of community planning but also in terms of the content, so that they are serving the full diversity of their population.

742. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Karen, do you think that there is a common understanding of what the term "community planning" means amongst councillors?

743. **Ms Smyth**: No. I do not think that there is a particularly strong understanding across a number of sectors about what community planning means. I think that there is a different understanding among different Departments about what it means. That is why the guidance is so important. We have a legislative definition, but how it is worked out in practice is going to take some time. We have at least a year, hopefully two, to get the first iteration of community plans up and running. During that time, that understanding of what community planning means in a local area will need to develop. I say that deliberately because, what community planning looks like in mid and east Antrim might be different to what it looks like in Belfast. There is some flexibility in the guidance as to the outworkings of it: whether there is an area-based approach, one based on strategic themes, or a combination of the two. That is what it is supposed to be. It is supposed to be local, but it has to be within the strategic setting of the Programme for Government, the local government response and complementarity to the Programme for Government.

744. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: I just wanted to ask about the political partnership panel. What is the make-up of it? My understanding is that it has local government reps from each of the 11 councils, NILGA reps and Executive Ministers. What sort of representation is there from local councils on the panel?

745. **Ms Smyth**: I do not have the exact political make-up of that with me. I can furnish the Committee staff with that later this afternoon. Certainly, there is a good cross-section of political parties across the panel. We have one representative, obviously, from each of the 11 councils, and there are up to five representatives from NILGA. The key function, apart from the strategic consensus-building that NILGA does, is to ensure that a political balance is provided. We know the importance of ensuring that smaller parties and quieter voices are represented at that table. So, the balance issue is an important one, and that is why we are on the panel in the first place.

746. **Mr Lyttle**: That is helpful. I just wonder how MLAs or Assembly Committees stay up-to-date with the work of the panel, given that it seems to be the one area of representation that is not covered on it. It seems like a useful framework to try to lead on issues.

747. **Ms Smyth**: I am sorry to cut across you. As you have already stated, it is very early days for the panel. It is working out what it is and what it is going to do. Also, the new councils will become operational on 1 April. Most of them will have an AGM in March, and their representation on the panel will probably change after that. That may have the effect of markedly changing the political representation on it, because people may have cottoned on to how important

it is going to be, and that may impact on which parties prioritise membership as a position of responsibility.

748. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: This could be my final question. If you were doing a SWOT analysis of community planning and its ability to deliver the T:BUC policy, what would be the strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities and threats?

749. **Ms Smyth**: The strengths would be bringing key players together and being able to work on themes or specific areas. We have weaknesses, in that we are not particularly happy at the moment with how the Departments are tied in to the process. Because the Departments are setting the policy and strategy — and I refer to all Departments — we are trying to ensure that their feet are under the table, specifically those Departments that have service-delivery arms. We are still trying to tease that out, and, certainly, the Minister is working quite hard to ensure that the statutory partners legislation is written in such a way that Departments are fully tied in. Jackie could perhaps come in on the opportunities that she sees at local level. We are a bit worried that people are going to perceive it as some sort of panacea or magic wand that will solve everybody's problems. Specifically, we possibly have an issue in managing the expectations of the community and voluntary sector. It is an opportunity to completely change how local government, Northern Ireland and the community operate. If it works, it should be quite successful.

750. **Ms Patton**: Notwithstanding those weaknesses, we have a specific community planning directorate and a specific director in the structure that Anne Donaghy is purporting in Mid and East Antrim council. Good relations is going to sit under that department. That is very welcome. As Sue said earlier, it is the case in certain councils that good relations was not to the fore as perhaps it should have been. I was a good-relations officer for many years, and I very much welcome that.

751. In Mid and East Antrim council, we are at the start of the process of engaging with our statutory partners and the community engagement aspect. We are currently working to the foundation programme's themes. As you will be aware, one of those is safety and good relations. I would be very surprised if safety and good relations was not one of the key themes. I certainly think that it augurs well in terms of opportunities. It is good to get it out there and to have the community consultation. The themes that we will be looking at will be very specific to safety and good relations.

752. Another aspect of the operational point of view is the example of the policing and community safety partnerships (PCSPs). When I worked in Ballymena council, I worked closely with the officers there in terms of community safety and the district policing partnerships (DPPs), but I did not necessarily have a seat at the table. I welcome that opportunity; it will, hopefully, be more joined up.

753. It is very early days. I have been in post only since October. This is obviously new for all the councils. It is about taking time at this point in terms of trying to set up the structures as best we can, but we realise that we will make mistakes. We need to try to learn from those as we move forward. I certainly very much welcome the opportunity in terms of good relations. Again, it is good that it is well referenced in the statutory guidance. That is certainly to be welcomed. One area that perhaps could be enhanced is race relations. Perhaps Mary wants to speak a little bit about that in terms of the statutory guidance.

754. **Ms Kerr**: The racial equality strategy is forthcoming. We welcome that; we look forward to seeing the final document. How can community planning help to deliver T:BUC? T:BUC is a very strong strategy in terms of its vision. When it is broken down into the implementation side and the project, it becomes less of an inclusive document and more of an exclusive document. It goes back to the two-community model, whereas, when it sets out its vision, it is a very inclusive model. I perceive that as a

possible weakness when we are looking at promoting good race relations and looking at community planning as a vehicle for that. The emphasis in T:BUC is still on looking at one particular fault line in the community at the expense of another, lesser fault line that is growing. If that is not addressed now, greater need will have built up 10 years down the line. It is very important to coordinate those documents and to spell out how the racial equality strategy is going to coordinate with T:BUC and how they are both going to be supportive of and supported by community planning.

755. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is the racial equality strategy missed out on the ground?

756. **Ms Kerr**: Yes. It is very ad hoc; people are firefighting a lot. The organisations working on the ground are very client-facing. We work in a very strategic area, but we talk to a lot to organisations that have much more of an operational role. They really feel that there is a lack of strategic direction. They are very much looking forward to the racial equality strategy. The gap where the racial equality strategy has not been has been filled by community groups really working to their capacity and beyond. There is a lot of coordination among the community and voluntary sector because those gaps have been there, and they had to be filled. With the absence of the strategy, it fell back to that sector to do a lot more because there was no overarching framework for it to work within.

757. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, is there a danger, Mary, that the strategy could become obsolete because people have had to make decisions about how to live their lives, and the T:BUC strategy, for example, might shape relationships, before the strategy comes out?

758. **Ms Kerr**: We hope that the strategy will be informed by the consultation responses and that it is not merely going to take up where the previous strategy left off. We hope that it will acknowledge how groups and organisations have moved forward and how relationships have developed. We understand that the final strategy will be available by the end of this financial year. We hope that it will acknowledge the work that is done in T:BUC. T:BUC acknowledges that there is a racial equality strategy and that the two will be working together, but it does not spell out how that is going to happen. The good-relations indicators are very much focused on the two-community model. Without seeing the racial equality strategy, how that is going to be measured and how these indicators are going to be brought together, it is very difficult to say how the two strategies will work together. However, as there is an acknowledgement in both that there is a need, we need that to be spelt out a little bit more.

759. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: 18 March is a key date for the Committee, because that is when we are due to have a briefing on the strategy. One would like to think that that indicates the policy is about to go to the printers.

760. **Ms Smyth**: Chair, may I come back on a more general point? It goes back to something that Alderman Ekin said earlier about having a conversation and looking closely at what we want to achieve and what we want the outcomes of all of this to be. I have seen the Programme for Government for Scotland, 'Scotland Performs'. They can get their entire Programme for Government on two sides of A4 because they have very tight outcomes, which everybody is working towards. Councils and the Scottish Government are working towards them. I think that that is the way we want to go. Community planning, T:BUC and all the strategies should be working together and feeding into a document like that so that everybody — the whole region — is clear about what we want to achieve.

761. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The Scottish Government's Programme for Government is two pages?

762. **Ms Smyth**: The summary of it is on two sides of A4.

763. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I like the style.

764. **Mr Spratt**: What has NILGA done to try to lobby and put the point that has just been made, to OFMDFM? Lobbying should be part of your job.

765. **Ms Smyth**: Of course.

766. **Mr Spratt**: It is easy to say what you have said.

767. **Ms Smyth**: It is.

768. **Mr Spratt**: Tell me what you have done or what you intend to do.

769. **Ms Smyth**: Our chief executive has met the Ministers from OFMDFM. We do lobby. We have developed a programme for local government. It has been put round all of the relevant Departments. It is designed to be complementary to, and inform, the forthcoming Programme for Government. It also takes on board something the Chair said earlier about potential further devolution and taking on further functions once political confidence has been built in the transfer of the functions that will be taken on. We are at a very difficult time in relation to NILGA and local government. At the moment, NILGA is in the process of reconstituting, so we are in a slightly weakened position. That is why there is not an elected member with me at today's session. We are in the process of consulting with the 11 councils on their engagement over the next period, funding mechanisms, membership, new constitutions, and so forth. That has not come to a resolution, as yet. So, we are continuing to negotiate on some thorny issues with some of them. We have strong support from all of them, as far as I can see, to continue, particularly on the lobbying role and the consensus-building role. I should say that we are working more on financial issues. At the moment, the way in which we are constituted means that we represent the 26 councils, and we need to develop the constitution and membership to represent the 11. We are in between two stools at the moment. Very shortly, we will begin a much more concerted effort to lobby along those lines — local government finance and strategic policy — and we have support from the 11 councils to do that. We are doing what we can to support them in advance of their eventual sign up.

770. **Mr Spratt**: You have just made a statement to the Committee to say that the chief executive lobbied OFMDFM Ministers. Was that the First Minister and the deputy First Minister, or was it the junior Ministers? When did that lobbying take place, and what was the lobby about?

771. **Ms Smyth**: I would need to go back to the office to get the details of the visits. As far as I understand, there have been a number of visits. I know that we have had contact with officials about various aspects of OFMDFM's work, and that would be more on the economic policy side and the Programme for Government side. I know that the chief executive led on some of those visits, but there may have been visits with members as well. I do not have the detail of that at the moment, but I can certainly furnish the Committee with that.

772. **Mr Spratt**: In evidence a short time ago, you specifically said — it will be on the record in Hansard — that the chief executive met OFMDFM Ministers.

773. **Ms Smyth**: As far as I am aware.

774. **Mr Spratt**: So you are not sure? You made a statement, and you are not sure now.

775. **Ms Smyth**: I am not 100% sure, but I am fairly sure that he has met at least one of the junior Ministers.

776. **Mr Spratt**: So you are retracting the first statement that you made.

777. **Ms Smyth**: If that has caused confusion, yes.

778. **Mr Spratt**: It is not causing confusion, but we need to get it clear. You cannot make a statement and say that you have had meetings. I want to know what those meetings were about and on what issues the chief executive lobbied. Perhaps, Chair, we can get a letter back from NILGA — from the chief executive

— to tell us exactly when those meetings took place, if they took place, and what the lobbies were about so that we are clear.

779. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I think that that is agreed. Karen, are you content with that?

780. **Ms Smyth**: Yes.

781. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Jackie, Mary and Karen, thank you very much. Mary, I apologise again for the confusion.

782. **Ms Kerr**: It was nice to have another hat.

783. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Clearly, we shall give some thought as to how we keep abreast of the political partnership panel, which may be the key in this area. Thank you very much indeed.

11 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Mr Peter Mullin	*Landscape Institute*
Dr Stephen McCabe	*Northern Ireland Environment Link*

784. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We are joined today by Dr Stephen McCabe, who is policy and projects officer with Northern Ireland Environment Link, and Pete Mullin, who is the policy representative for the Landscape Institute. Gentlemen, you are very welcome. Would you like to make some opening remarks?

785. **Dr Stephen McCabe (Northern Ireland Environment Link)**: Thank you, Chair, for your welcome this afternoon and to the Committee for the invitation to give evidence to the inquiry.

786. For those of you who do not know, Northern Ireland Environment Link is the forum and networking body for non-statutory organisations concerned with the environment in Northern Ireland. Its members represent a significant constituency in Northern Ireland and manage a large land area that delivers a variety of benefits to society. Members are involved in environmental issues at all levels from the local community, which is obviously relevant to this inquiry, to the global environment. Environment Link brings together a wide range of knowledge and expertise that can be used to develop policy and practice.

787. With regard to the implementation of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC), a really simple but important point that I would like to make today is that there is a significant body of research that demonstrates that the environment is a key factor in building community cohesion. While no individual or single discipline has all the answers to complex social issues, part of the solution to community division will be found in addressing environmental enhancement. Well-designed and well-maintained shared green space in urban areas has been shown to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, contributing to the establishment of stable societies. As people feel more comfortable and feel more pride in the place where they live, their confidence in their identity increases and they feel less threatened. Furthermore, better integration of things like land and transport planning naturally leads to better functioning places and spaces, which can lead to greater social inclusion.

788. Green infrastructure is something that we would like to get across to you today. Essentially, it means using green and blue space — vegetation and the water environment — *[Interruption.]*

789. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Stephen, I am so sorry.

790. **Dr McCabe**: Don't worry.

791. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I suspect that we may be away for some time.

792. **Mr Spratt**: I propose that we adjourn the meeting, Chair.

793. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Would you be willing to come back on another occasion?

794. **Dr McCabe**: We would be.

795. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am really sorry.

796. **Dr McCabe**: That is how it goes some times. We understand.

797. **Mr Pete Mullin (Landscape Institute)**: I will change the wording of this —

798. **Mr Lyttle**: Chair, I know that we are in a rush, but, for what it is worth, I think it would be a really valuable contribution, so it would be good to reschedule.

799. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We would definitely like to reschedule.

800. We have a proposal from Mr Spratt, and I do not think we need to put it to a vote. We need to adjourn, but hopefully we will get back together.

Committee adjourned (Division in the House).

18 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray

Witnesses:

Mr Johnston Price	*Forthspring Inter Community Group*
Ms Roisin McGlone	*Interaction Belfast*
Mr Terry Donaghy Ms Caroline Murphy	*Suffolk Community Forum*

801. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We are very grateful to Interaction Belfast for hosting us today. The witnesses joining us are Roisin McGlone of Interaction Belfast; Johnston Price from Forthspring Inter Community Group, whom we have met before; and Caroline Murphy and Terry Donaghy from the Suffolk Community Forum. All four are very welcome. Forthspring Inter Community Group and Interaction Belfast have provided written evidence through our call for evidence. The Suffolk pocket plots initiative was brought to our attention by the Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) in its written submission. Caroline, I understand that you have been unwell since Christmas, so I want to say a particular thank you for considering it important enough to make yourself available today. I appreciate that.

802. **Ms Caroline Murphy (Suffolk Community Forum)**: Thank you.

803. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: No doubt you have enough to fill the afternoon, but we will try to restrict you, collectively, to 10 minutes, if that is OK, so that we get the best interaction possible.

804. **Mr Johnston Price (Forthspring Inter Community Group)**: I will start off and keep it very brief before handing over to Caroline and then Roisin.

805. Thanks, first, for your invitation and the opportunity to come along. We can talk more specifically during questions about the interface, but I will reiterate the general points made about Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) in Forthspring's submission to the Committee. We believe that T:BUC fundamentally lacks ambition. It lacks a vision of what a shared society would look like, which makes it quite an impoverished document. It lacks a commitment to tackling sectarianism, and the absence of a definition of good relations is a barrier to helping to promote a more positive society and a clear sense of where we want to go as a community.

806. The document reads like a compromise, albeit that it has desirable measures within it. Overall, it feels very much like the lowest common denominator. It is not a policy that gives us vision or encouragement at interfaces or anywhere else in our society. We raised a specific point about the funding that has been derived from OFMDFM, and we carefully used the word "appalling". There has been a series of delays, an absence of transparency and there is no appeal process. There is a widely held belief that it is, at best, a political carve-up and, at worst, a sectarian carve-up. In the absence of transparency, people will talk, as it were.

807. There is an opportunity, post the Stormont House Agreement, to address the legacy of the conflict in T:BUC. That was, as many people pointed out, a glaring omission from the original policy. There is a huge amount of work to be done in interfaces on safety, regeneration and relationships, and more vision would create more opportunity there.

808. **Ms Murphy**: I will not talk about the strategy per se. Rather, I will talk about how we interpret it on the ground and what we are doing, which I believe is what NIEL referred to. In putting into practice building united communities, we, as an interface community, have some land within the Suffolk boundaries that we are trying to develop into shared space. We worked for a long time with Lenadoon on the shared space building on the Stewartstown Road, but we are now working with the communities off the Blacks Road, Willowvale and the surrounding area, and Brooke to develop a little interface buffer zone of 0·8 of an acre into shared family-size allotments. In order to do that, we are supported by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. I have been working towards this since late 2009, which indicates that it is a very slow process. We are coming to the nitty-gritty now of consultations with colleagues and friends, not only in Suffolk but on the other side of the interface. There has never been any interaction between the two, so there are trust issues there: who will trust whom?

809. As I said, we are working with the Housing Executive. We have been talking to Matt Garrett and some of the other community representatives from the Brooke area to put this into practice. Money should not be a driver, but we have applied to Space and Place because we cannot do anything unless we have sufficient funds to do it. We are now through to the final stage of Space and Place, looking at asking for £350,000 towards making it a reality. Beside the buffer zone, there is a large piece of contested ground on which we plan, and hope, to develop a fishing and leisure park that will be shared space. You have the drawings for that. They are very rough topographical drawings. The allotments will be the first phase; the fishing and leisure park will be the second phase. Basically, it is bringing down to the ground the aspiration of building united communities. To make this viable and sustainable, we want to make it economically viable and develop it into a social enterprise. Key to all that would be developing a horticultural training centre on the contested land alongside the fishing and leisure park, developing stuff from that and an interface market.

810. I am quite happy to answer any questions on that, but I do not want to labour the subject. The handout that we gave you shows the main bullet points. As I say, we are not talking about the strategy, which, to people on the ground, is way up in the air somewhere; we are talking about how it is on the ground.

811. **Ms Roisin McGlone (Interaction Belfast)**: I will try to marry the two things that we have just been talking about. We need to contextualise T:BUC and what it is really about. For us, T:BUC really should be a contribution towards a reconciliation process — it is as simple as that.

812. We have provided you with an extensive written submission. If you want to know about the organisation, some of the things that we have done and the theories and policies behind what we have done, you will find all that in the submission. I did not want to play on that, emphasise it or talk about this organisation. Really, I wanted to talk about what reconciliation is. Very briefly, it is both a goal and a process. In your case, politics is to deal with the issues that divided our past, whereas we see our grass-roots reconciliation process as a process to redesign the relationships of the imperfect reality that we have. That has some very painful challenges. The problem with T:BUC is that it reflects the politicians' temptation to concentrate on the political process element of issues: looking at schools, young people, walls and interfaces. I think that, sometimes — to give you your fair due — as politicians, you are concerned about examining the past because you think that there is a danger of damaging the political and social stability. The reality of reconciliation is that it applies to all of us, and we need to come to terms with the past in order to guarantee that we do not go back to it.

813. Moving on slightly from T:BUC, although I will come back to it, I think that the Stormont House Agreement certainly

has given us more meat on the bones of what could be done with regard to a reconciliation process. Your job as politicians is to reach agreements and negotiate about issues of conflict. You find the compromise, you bargain and you pragmatically cooperate within the bound of your self-interest and party interests. That is a vital part of our transformation from conflict, but our job is to address the broken relationships between the communities that you represent as well as the issues that broke us.

814. The sad reality is that we do not have a lot of money, and we know that there is not a lot of money. However, T:BUC misses out completely on two things that do not cost a lot: the ordinary people who are prepared to pay a personal rather than a financial price to achieve progress; and the home-grown mechanisms developed from learned and lived experiences on interfaces. I have been working on interfaces in north and west Belfast since about 1966. We have developed mobile phone networks, forms of peaceful protest, peace projects and protocols. The international community realises the importance of reconciliation as an ingredient in conflict prevention, human security and peace building. People from all over the world come to this organisation, and probably to the other two organisations as well — Japan, eastern Europe and America — to look at our practice. Yet our practice is not being implemented in T:BUC or in some of the issues around it.

815. I will not go on for much longer. The work on interfaces should not be focused on the walls — they are the least important part. What appears to have happened through T:BUC is that the architecture has become important. There are three stages of reconciliation at interfaces. First, replace fear by non-violent coexistence, and I think that most of us have done that over the last number of years. Secondly, where fear no longer rules, we should be building confidence and trust, and I think that we have begun to do that among activists but not necessarily among residents on the ground. The final stage, which we have not yet reached, is the move towards empathy.

816. My appeal to you is this: recognise the expertise in the field; allow this to happen through joined-up government codes of practice and protocols, and involve civic society in developing and evolving that process of reconciliation. However, most important of all is this: will somebody please be our champion?

817. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you all very much. You have given us some very fundamental challenges in terms of the document and practice on the ground.

818. I will start with your very last point, Roisin. You said that, collectively, you get global interest in what you do on the ground but that it is not matched, if I heard you correctly, by the level of interest from across town — Parliament Buildings.

819. **Ms R McGlone**: I do not think that we have the mechanisms yet. I go back to the point that I made about politicians. You have your role to play and we have our role to play in reconciliation. In civic society, I do not think that we have yet found the mechanisms to be able to do that. I think that there may be an opportunity, through T:BUC, as part of a reconciliation process, to do that, but we do not yet have the mechanism to bring out the best. Some of our work is recorded in books written in Australia, Jerusalem and America. Another one, Vicky Cosstick's book on interfaces, is coming out quite soon. On the back of the work that we do, many academics are publishing PhDs and books about the peace process, but I do not think that Stormont has found a mechanism yet whereby civic society can be engaged.

820. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is a fair point, and flowing from the Stormont House Agreement is the question of how we re-engage civic society. After 1998, there was the Civic Forum.

821. **Ms R McGlone**: I was a member of that forum, Mike, so I know about that.

822. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I was not in this role at the time, but my impression of today's critique of it is that it did not work. Is that reasonable as a headline?

823. **Ms R McGlone**: I will be absolutely blunt: there was not a lot of political support for it. First, people were interested in other things. Secondly, the Civil Service did not know how to deal with it. The forum was made up of a diverse range of people from the Orange Order to residents' groups to community relations groups to Church groups, and the Civil Service did not know how to handle us. A direct rule Civil Service did not have the skills to deal with civic society. No offence — you do not expect them to. Thirdly, maybe it was not facilitated as well as it could have been. We were probably at fault as well, because we did not know what we were doing either.

824. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I do not want to stray too far from the role of Chair, but I sense that there is a commitment from the five parties to try to find a way to do it that is affective. That is ongoing.I was struck by your comment that what we are talking about is a goal and a process. Caroline, you made the point that it is slow. What factors slow it down?

825. **Ms Murphy**: There is a lack of trust between communities; uncertainty about the position of the volunteers who make up the community forums and how they can be sustained; and a high level of burnout — Terry is very committed, but he could tell you about the amount of unpaid work that he does. Those are all very real factors. There is also a lack of commitment among many of the agencies that we work with in the statutory sector. We have been very lucky with the Housing Executive, which has been absolutely superb in its support, but we do not know, given all the cuts and so forth, what resources we will have in the forum itself. Then, we are trying to work on the ground to get trust, not only of the other community but of the community in Suffolk. We want to say to them, "You'll not be betrayed. This land might be within your boundary and might be considered your territory, but your neighbours are important, too, and this will be so much better if it is shared". All those factors make it a slow and laborious process. It has been speeding up just recently, but you need to watch your step.

826. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If trust is a fundamental value, presumably one of the great threats to it is beyond your control, namely external events that just happen.

827. **Ms Murphy**: They do, but we have been very lucky in the sense that somebody up there is pushing it along anyway. We have had the flags protest and a lot of negativity about that, and we have seen the way in which disadvantaged Protestant communities are alienated and disaffected, but, somehow or other, we have managed to keep this ball in the air. We are blooming determined that we will continue with it.

828. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Johnston, you began by very starkly criticising the document for a lack of vision. This is your opportunity to put your thoughts on the record.

829. **Mr Price**: The first thing to be said is that it is called Together: Building a United Community, so we have to accept that we have very different constitutional aspirations in this place, live with that and do so in such a way that we can respect and get on with each other.

830. You asked about impediments to progress. There is a lack of trust, but there are historical reasons for that, and they need to be addressed. There is also cynicism, and it is important that political leaders do not send out contradictory messages all the time. On the one hand, we get positive media and press releases about urban villages; on the other hand, we get very bitter squabbling about the past or whatever.

831. If our vision is of a place where we respect and trust each other, there are other things that we can do. People keeping their word would help. There was a commitment in the Good Friday

Agreement to an anti-poverty strategy. A lot of the time, we look at the relationship between communities in terms of Protestant and Catholic, but, in fact, a lot of people suffer chronic social and economic disadvantage, and that can be underpinned by people feeling very alienated and disengaged. If you wanted to send out positive messages, you would do what you said that you would do and keep your word.

832. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What is your vision? Do you have one?

833. **Mr Price**: Yes. It is maybe what Belfast was like briefly in and around 1995, when people were prepared to engage with each other and there was optimism. My vision is of a place where a Protestant can choose to live where he wants and Catholics can live where they want; where we do not have to talk about buffers and segregation; and where I can aspire to be whatever I want to be in terms of my identity and can respect someone else's identity. It is not really that complicated — it is a place where people are decent to each other.

834. One of the projects that I have been working on recently is the 5 Decades project, which deals with very contentious issues because it is about people's experience of living through the conflict. I am not wearing rose-tinted spectacles, but I was shocked — I do not think that that is too strong a word — by the extent of the generosity and understanding that people displayed for other people's experience, which is at odds with much of the political rhetoric on the subject.

835. I think that we need to create space where people can engage with each other, share the difficult experiences that they have had and treat each other with respect. Belfast is my city; it is a place that I love.

836. Forthspring has a very large youth project, and I have seen a noticeable change in the attitudes of young people. That is an important message to get across. I have been working in and around here for six years and have definitely seen change in that period. Young people are more into sharing and getting on with each other; they have less time for bitterness and old animosities. So, when thinking about impediments, we should not ignore the fact that there has been change in this place. There are many ways in which it is a more decent, a fairer and a more equal place.

837. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have given us something very positive there. You also say that, to a certain extent, 1995 was a high point for you. How would you characterise the journey from 1995 to 2015?

838. **Mr Price**: It has been a journey from hope and optimism to cynicism, which is a sad reflection of where we are today.

839. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Not for young people, though.

840. **Mr Price**: Young people have found their own way, and you make a fair point. We talk to young people from this part of the city, and, 20 years ago, they would never have been in the city centre. They have more space now. I am not saying that it is ideal by any means. There are enormous inequalities in our city. Every day, when I come to work, I come into an area where less than 30% of the kids get five or more GCSEs. At night, I travel home to an area where, in many locations, 90% or more of kids will get five or more GCSEs. It is not surprising that we have tensions, division and alienation in our city, but we can have a much better city and a much better society.

841. **Ms Murphy**: May I come in on the back of something that Johnston said? I mentioned the alienation of disadvantaged Protestant communities. You have the strategy and all that it purports to support and wants to take forward, but, on the ground, as Johnston said, qualification levels are extremely low, particularly amongst Protestants. Suffolk is an enclave, and those on the other side of the interface are slightly better off, so there is that kind of inequality there. If we are developing

something, we have to be aware of, and try to cater for, the reality on the ground. There are low qualifications, significant health deficits and low job expectations — low expectations in general. That is the bread-and-butter issue that walks hand in hand with all this.

842. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Let us look at that again because educational underachievement is not new, and it is not confined to Protestant working-class boys. It has been around for decades, not years. Health issues have been around for decades, not years. It seems to me that, as a Government, we put an awful lot of effort into measuring: for example, we have the Noble indices, super output areas and league tables. We spend tens of millions, and, on some occasions, even over £100 million on specific communities, yet they remain in the same place in the league table. Whatever we are doing, it is not working.

843. **Ms R McGlone**: It is not working.

844. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Does this document contribute to a fix?

845. **Ms R McGlone**: I do not know. The consensus of people on the ground is that they are very cynical about the T:BUC document. I cannot not say that. I am in the community relations sector, and people have been scrabbling around for a long time. It is not all about T:BUC. One of our problems is that funders have different needs, and we have to meet those needs. There is not even a joined-up approach there, and there is not a joined-up approach in government either. To me, T:BUC looks like a fragmented document, in that there is a bit about young people, a bit about schools and a bit about interfaces, which is all about taking down walls. I cannot help being cynical when we look back at Bloomberg, somebody from outside this country saying that we need to take down the walls. No, we do not. We need to get people to build relationships so that they want the walls to come down. We have that the wrong way round.

846. You are right, Mike, that a lot of things have not changed, and yet, like Johnston, I am amazed by the resilience of young people and their ability not to take some of the routes that we have taken. Although the communities that we work with are still a bit frightened and they are frightened when they hear about a wall coming down or whatever, they are much more generous than our politicians sometimes.I know that you are politicians and it sounds as if I am saying that you are something separate, but you just have to listen to the radio sometimes and you do not want to come to work in the morning. You say to yourself, "Is that the way we are going?". I am being serious about that: we need examples and models of good practice, and we need champions. We need people who are talking about a reconciliation process. We need to start using that language and those processes, and we need to start unpicking that. There are loads of international examples; we are not the first country that has had conflict or which is post-conflict. I am sorry, but sometimes it can be very frustrating when you are working such a long time in the field and you see —

847. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Absolutely. I will take that criticism on the chin because it is, sometimes, challenging to demonstrate the spirit of generosity that I think is important for somebody like me to show. It is too easy to be negative; I am guilty of that on occasions, so I certainly take that point.

848. Caroline, you said that money should not be a driver, but, presumably —

849. **Ms Murphy**: You cannot do anything without it either.

850. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So it is.

851. **Ms Murphy**: It is about finding a balance. I am quite passionate about what we are doing, but I am also very frustrated at times because of the distrust between communities — "They are not going to do this because they etc etc". They live cheek by jowl, but they do not know each other and they

are not willing to come out. I talked about deficits, but you can translate that into lack of confidence and apathy — "No matter what we do, nothing is going to change". I want to grab them and tell them that it is going to change but that they need to work at it. You are looking at a strategy on the one hand; yes, we can pick through it and see where we can use it, but we cannot do it on our own. We are not driven by money, but we cannot do it without money or support.

852. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You said that sometimes you want to grab people and tell them that they have to work at it. Are people willing to work at it?

853. **Ms Murphy**: Yes; not universally so, but yes, of course they are. You will get the naysayers —

854. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Of course.

855. **Ms Murphy**: — People are willing to work at it, but they need the drivers.

856. **Ms R McGlone**: We started the mobile network between 1996 and 1998 when Drumcree was at its worst, and we started it in north Belfast. Twenty or 30 people from both communities gave up 24 hours, seven days a week, and not one penny changed hands. That has since developed across the whole of the North. It has to be something worthwhile. Why would you want to bring somebody out of their house? As you were saying, Caroline, there has to be a benefit. Why would you take on dealing with difficult relationships if you could just stay in your own area and not worry too much about them'uns on the other side of the fence? You would not have to have any difficult meetings and go to places and people that you were frightened of. Why would you? Why would anybody? It has to be done.

857. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I have two more points before I open it up to members. I want to go back to Johnston's opening remarks. We talked about the lack of vision that he identified in the document. Then you said that there was a failure to make a commitment to tackle sectarianism. Does that mean, Johnston, that you simply want to see the words "we will commit to tackling sectarianism" in the document or do you want to see a vision or route map for how that will be achieved?

858. **Mr Price**: We need a legal definition of good relations for a start so that it can be promoted in a way that supports and underpins equality but which gives us a sense of the society that we want, where we can acknowledge that it is wrong to be discriminatory or bigoted. We need to send out a positive message on that.

859. I want to make a brief comment about money. When T:BUC came out, all the consultation on the Peace IV moneys showed clearly that the line being taken on Peace IV was informed by the limitations of T:BUC. More progress has been made in the Stormont House Agreement, and it would be useful if some consideration were given to having a wider notion of how the Peace IV moneys were spent, certainly in relation to dealing with the past and the legacy of the conflict.

860. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have covered sectarianism and good relations, and I think that I am right in saying that work is being done on a definition of good relations.

861. **The Committee Clerk**: It was supposed to be in the context of —

862. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The new commission, yes.

863. **Ms McGahan**: Thank you. I apologise for missing your presentation. I have just come from the Employment and Learning Committee, where we were dealing with a wheen of community groups that might lose their funding under the European social fund (ESF), and quite a number of them are from Belfast.

864. I want to zoom in on poverty and disadvantage. I represent Fermanagh and South Tyrone. I am from a rural area, and I look at Belfast and see universities sitting on top of each other — a wheen of community groups

delivering skills and qualifications and an FE college — and, for the life of me, I cannot understand why we have so much poverty and disadvantage, because it is generally accepted that skills and qualifications are key to taking you out of poverty and disadvantage. There is probably another problem with intergenerational poverty, and there is a strategy to deliver social change. I would like to hear your views on that.

865. **Mr Price**: This is probably more a personal than an organisational view. The answer is fairly straightforward: we reproduce inequality in this society through education, and we do it through a segregated and divisive education system. It is perfectly grand if you get a grammar-school education and then the universities with all the investment put into them are waiting for you. OK, there might be some difficulties with loans, but your access to the labour market improves dramatically . The FE college is there as well. However, there is a whole raft of young people in this city and in our society across the board who are not being given those opportunities, and that is how you deliver your resources and use them. Whilst we continue to ignore the fact — I have to point the finger particularly at politicians who are elected in working-class areas and who are content to support an education system that does that disservice to the young people in their areas — it is a crime; it is a sin; it is a disgrace to our society. We will remain an unequal society whilst that remains the case.

866. **Ms McGahan**: I know that the Minister of Education has the view that every school should be a good school; no child should be left behind. What is the issue?

867. **Ms R McGlone**: Education is not just about school. In some senses, we see a terrible lack of confidence in communities; there is a lack of aspiration and a lack of confidence. That is linked in with parenting — I mean that in the broadest sense possible; I do not mean parenting skills. As far as I can see, certainly from the nationalist and unionist communities that I work with, there is a leftover of trauma that disables people from having aspirations and having thought for the future. I very rarely speak to working-class people on either side of this interface who talk about university. I am from a working-class background, and I went to university as did my children, but we are losing those kids as well. That is the other thing, Bronwyn: we are losing kids who are going to university. From working in this area, I see that people have a lack of confidence in their ability to bring their kids up, to encourage their kids, and to have aspirations for them. I do not know what schools can do about that.

868. **Mr Price**: The point here is very clear. It does not really matter how you set about explaining it; it does not matter even how you analyse it. All you have to do is look at the outcomes. You look at the outcomes, and if that is the outcome, it is not a satisfactory outcome. You can blame whomever you want — the communities, the parents or whatever else — but it is not a fair outcome. It is a costly outcome for our society, because you are perfectly right about the role that skills and qualifications play in promoting a positive economy, but we are ensuring — whether every school is a good school, whether every child pursues the same curriculum — that the outcome is not the same. The life choices and opportunities for so many young people are so much better than for others. It is happening in very geographic and very concentrated areas. If we want to change that, we would put resources into those areas and into the schools to start levelling out the outcomes. It would have quite a political impact in some ways, but if this is the society that we want now, we have it; if we want a different one, we have to invest in all our children.

869. **Ms Murphy**: It is very important to realise that when you look at the areas and see the schools and the universities you think that everybody has those opportunities, but, as Johnston says, they do not. I am from an inner east Belfast family whose tradition was that the boys went into trades and the girls went to a good office job. This particular

girl wanted to go to university but could not go until a later stage. I was very lucky, because I had parents who were interested and who looked beyond where they lived in an inner-city area. Yes, they would have been among what used to be called the labour aristocracy in that my father had a trade. However, that is not the situation on the ground; that is not what is happening in the schools that our children go to.

870. My background is in teaching literacy and essential skills. A wide-ranging survey was done in the early 90s that revealed that 24% of people in Northern Ireland had a reading age of 11. That is one in four. How are children going through school not able to read and write properly? That needs to be addressed, as it has been a bone of contention for years. There has been talk about it; we are good at talking, but we are not good at really looking at stuff. We have league tables for schools. We say that a school is a good school because A, B C and D pass A, B C and D, but what about the children who are slower? What about those mixed abilities? What about doing something about how we direct teaching, how we stream those children and how we stop looking at success? Look at training; we have children and young people being constantly recycled on training, and for what?

871. **Ms McGahan**: The universities have the Widening Access strategy, which is used to tackle those areas of poverty and disadvantage. Is that not working?

872. **Ms R McGlone**: No; not in this area.

873. **Ms McGahan**: OK. Have you had conversations with people in the universities to say that you need a game changer because the strategy is not working?

874. **Ms R McGlone**: We work on interfaces, Bronwyn, and that is what we concentrate on. It is not something that I have been a part of.

875. **Mr Price**: Forthspring works with young people and provides opportunities to get them back into training so that they can get some initial qualifications. However, the dice are loaded against them. The universities have those commitments. but people have to get to a certain point on the education ladder before they can access the universities.

876. **Ms McGahan**: But there are strategies for that, even at FE level. I sit on the DEL Committee so I am across that, but maybe I will do a follow-up with you on that to drill down and see what the problems are from a DEL perspective.

877. **Mr Price**: That would be grand, yes.

878. **Ms R McGlone**: Absolutely.

879. **Mr Price**: This is not unconnected to T:BUC, because if you want a society with better relationships and equality you need to give people the opportunities to play their part in that society.

880. **Ms R McGlone**: And to contribute.

881. **Ms Murphy**: I have been talking about practice on the ground. If I say to you, for example, that we would like a horticultural training centre, it would not be stand-alone. The Colin neighbourhood partnership has a little training area, and we have the Colin Glen Trust; we can work together to develop rounded qualifications. The green economy is a growth area; can we respond to that? Can we respond to the lack of training in areas? We can take from a wide catchment, but there needs to be a purpose.

882. Government are willing to give grants to employers, but the outcomes are not there. The money is going to employers for training and, maybe, the trainees are taken on for so many months, but then they are dropped off at the other end. Education also needs to have progression routes. You are looking at a strategy at the top, but you need to look at a practical strategy on the ground that responds to a variety of actions and economic realities. There is a mismatch with what is actually happening. There are aspirations with these strategies, but they are not translating down on the ground.

883. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Caroline, there is the question of the role of the Government at Stormont. At the moment, it seems to me that we try to set a strategy that, as you correctly identify, sits up there well divorced from day-to-day life on the ground. Is it up to us not just to say, "Here is the strategy, but here is, figuratively speaking, the 400-page manual for delivering it, and unless you tick every box you do not get your funding."? Should we not be saying, "You take the power, we have set the vision, you know how to deliver it on the ground here"? How you deliver it on the ground here might be different from how you deliver it in Dungiven or on the Newtownards Road. In fact, the way you deliver it on the Lower Newtownards Road is probably significantly different from how you might deliver it on the Upper Newtownards Road. Would it be mature of us as a government to say, "You know the vision; you deliver it as you see fit on the ground"?

884. **Ms Murphy**: I think so, but by the same token you need to have mechanisms in place whereby there is good monitoring and evaluation of what is going on. A lot of money has been wasted on pilots and three-year funding cycles. In the first year of funding, you are setting all your ducks in a row, if you like; in the second year, you are coming into your stride; but by the end of the third year you are off the other end and there is something else, some new flavour of the month, to move onto. There needs to be continuity and good monitoring and evaluation and, yes, there needs to be recognition that the community organisations are working like hell on the ground. We are all working in interface areas — working like hell and getting nowhere.

885. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. Let me park funding, because we have had issues raised by other groups. I want to come back, Johnston and Roisin, to this idea that we are high accountability and low trust. If we were to rebalance to higher trust and essential accountability in evaluating and monitoring, what impact would that make?

886. **Ms R McGlone**: It would make a big impact. We are in the business of building relationships, except between one another. When anything happens at an interface area, on the Newtownards Road or wherever, the police and the community workers are called out. However, when there is nothing happening, when we are building the peace and making sure that things are happening properly, suddenly everybody disappears, there is no money available, and we are scrabbling around for pennies.

887. I would love to ask you about all the evaluations that you do and all the targets that you set; where does it all go? What have we learned from it? Is there a central bank somewhere that all that knowledge goes into that we have missed? Unless there is trust between politicians and community workers, all you will do is keep sucking us dry. There will be burnout, as Caroline mentioned earlier. Some of us may be already beyond burnout. Young people are not volunteering to do the type of work that we are doing. They will get involved in projects or come to a couple of meetings, but that is it. They look on us as eejits, the people who did the heavy-duty lifting. There are a couple of funders who are very good examples. The Irish Government's funding package to us over the years has been a lifeline, and they are very open and very trusting, but they get the results. We seem to be always meeting criteria, Mike, but we are never quite sure what the end result is.

888. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is kind of obsessive.

889. **Ms R McGlone**: Yes, it is obsessive.

890. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Fifty shades of measurement. [Laughter.]

891. **Ms R McGlone**: Just call it a different thing. There is a new one out at the moment.

892. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Johnston, do you have anything to add about accountability and trust?

893. **Mr Price**: It may be stating the obvious, but the role of politicians is to give

leadership and to create good policy. It might sound a bit optimistic or naive, even, but rather than the politics of deals and compromise, what about setting some objectives for where we want to be as a society and get there? When government get it very badly wrong, it has practical consequences. Bronwyn talked about widening access and increasing participation. Yet DEL virtually destroyed the adult and community education sector under very poor leadership. That has enormous impact on any possible remedial action against the disadvantage that people suffer in the education system in the first place. It is not just about improving the relationship; it is also about getting it right. The consequences of getting it wrong are all too real for people.

894. **Mr Maskey**: I sometimes find conversations a bit frustrating, because I am not sure that we are even at the point of having the real conversation. In the last evidence session, we heard from academics, who are very good people for the most part. They talk about taking down the peace walls; outcomes are taking down so many peace walls. There are, however, a lot of velvet curtains, as I would refer to them, that may as well be breeze-block walls. It just happens to be a higher class of segregation. Nobody is tackling professional bigotry.

895. Some of you will know about my own direct experience. Interestingly, Johnston, you were talking about the '94-'95 period, when the European Parliament funding boards started up. They were very good and challenged a lot of people, bringing together sectors that would not work together before. Alex, you were on that committee in Belfast. To me that was a breakthrough from where we had been when people would not go into the same room or people were excluded from the same rooms. That brought politicians, community groups, trade unions, business people and statutory bodies together, with the theme being how to tackle disadvantage, underpinned and overlaid with community relations and tackling division. Millions of pounds were spent. I was very pleased with the money that was disbursed for the most part into a lot of projects. A lot was really spent on building capacity in communities. A lot of the single-identity work and the projects could have been building something, but it was really about bringing people together. All that in my opinion was very good. Obviously, a lot of it was not as successful as you might have liked, but still it was going on at the time. It was all very embryonic.

896. Here we are so many years later, still talking about the same treadmill aimed at tackling some of the disadvantage; but we are still not dovetailing it into community relations. We need to get to is the point where we are saying: "If I am not ambitious enough, someone tell me what I need to be." I make no apologies for thinking that some of the T:BUC aspirations to bring thousands of young people together and place them in different communities are never going to happen in the numbers that I would like. I cannot see it happening, because I do not think there is enough buy-in in some of the communities. There might be an issue to do with money and capacity to bring groups of people in. I would look at that. I would be saying this: "Well, OK, if an area wants to bring people in and give them a meaningful shared experience and all the rest of it, in the way that T:BUC outlines, let us see if we can build the infrastructure". Organisations like yourselves would, in my opinion, be at the coalface. I do not see that happening. If OFMDFM went tomorrow morning and picked 20 areas, people would probably run out of the frigging area if they were asked to take 20 or 50 young people from September. They would be challenged to get them placed. I am being honest about that.

897. There are brilliant organisations on the ground, your own included, and a lot of brilliant work going on, including by Lenadoon and Suffolk. I live just up the street from Suffolk on Suffolk Road. There is an awful lot of good work going on, but then a lot of people beyond the people who are doing the good work

are just getting on with their life. A lot of people I know are, thankfully, doing OK. How do we get to people who are maybe dead on but are still living a half-segregated life, if you know what I mean? I agree with you. My kids, all my nephews and nieces, are going into places now where they would not have gone before. That is good. That is maybe more organic; that is what we can build on. Some of the older people are set in their ways and will not rush out to meet one another. Take it, Suffolk.

898. **Ms R McGlone**: And neither they should, Alex.

899. **Mr Maskey**: Maybe in some cases we are trying to flog a dead horse. Maybe we need to have a different conversation.

900. **Mr Price**: One of the ways you can definitely connect with people is through their children and their grandchildren. People may say, "I have lived life the way I have", but, when you ask them about their hopes and aspirations, you see that they have a lot of ambition for their children and grandchildren.

901. This is a bugbear of mine. Often children, particularly from the middle-class areas you were alluding to, Alex, meet other children from around the world. They go on study tours, they take part in house-building programmes through Habitat for Humanity or whatever and yet they do not meet people from different backgrounds in their own city. We certainly have plenty of young people on the Springfield Road who are more than willing to take part in programmes to help them form a positive relationship with people from a different background. Organisations that work with young people, particularly the Churches, need to focus a bit more on how we connect as a society. The selling point to people who are prepared to lead their comfortable lives behind whatever sort of curtains they have is this: what sort of place do you want to live in? What sort of society do you want? Do you want the lowest common denominator and to ignore your neighbour, or do you want somewhere where you can reach out and be generous? People here who live behind their curtains can also get very critical when there is a negative impact on the economy or they cannot drive their car into work or whatever.

902. There is a downside to all this, but we are prepared to spend a large sum out of the public purse on things like corporation tax, when in fact, this whole area of sharing and overcoming segregation and division would arguably have a much better impact on how people view this as a location down the road. At the minute, all we are doing, from looking at T:BUC, is trying to steer Peace IV into funding the narrow areas that have been identified in T:BUC. We are not really taking on the challenge of shared space as a society.

903. **Mr Maskey**: I will just follow up on the last point. For me, the question of how to define good community relations is the nub of it. The peace process is predicated on basically saying that we have different constitutional aspirations; I think you coined it yourself. That is there, and we are not going to change that until it is changed. People, however, have clearly held views, and I suspect that most people, when you scratch the surface, still have those views, which is fair enough. They are quite entitled to them. That is the difference between the old days of community relations, when we all let on that we did not have a problem, we are all the same, let us all have a nice cup of tea and we will be dead on, and nowadays, when we are supposed to be respecting differences, embracing them and working with them. I respect you, and you respect me and let us get on with it. If people in community relations let on that we do not have any big differences, we will never get an answer. That is being honest. That is not to be negative. I think that most people do respect most other people. In saying that, political representatives still have to talk to people on the doorstep, and people who live in these areas want their representatives to represent their

interests. There is a dichotomy in some of this.

904. I agree with you on long-term funding. I would like to focus on longer-term funding for the delivery of services and on getting the MOUs and service delivery agreements to deliver, whether that is in good relations, tackling disadvantage and so on. An awful lot of good people waste a lot of their very important time chasing funding packages, when they would be better off delivering what they are supposed to be delivering. I am one with you on that.

905. I would be interested to continue exploring this notion of good relations and how we define them, because I do not think we are at the nub of it yet.

906. **Mr Attwood**: I thank you for your forthright approach and the evident sense of exasperation that you convey. I do not think we should deny — that is not what you did — where we have come from in the last 20-odd years. You identified where new generations are compared with where our generation was. There have been multiple and good changes, but I think you capture very well that we are struggling around T:BUC and a lot of our society. We have to recognise that we are struggling and that it is a very big struggle. The scale of what is still needed to be addressed, and how to have the vision, ambition and wherewithal to address it are not being acknowledged or appreciated.

907. My view is that we are into a long period — a deep phase — of managing our conflict without transforming it. I think that informs our politics and our community, and it creates a sense of detachment and alienation and a lack of confidence in politics, but that is where we are. That needs a huge paradigm shift in the thinking of parties, politicians and leaders at all levels and in how government goes about its business. Otherwise, we will remain in a very long phase of managing and not transforming our conflict. Managing our conflict is better than what we had before, but it is not what our ambition should be. I worry, as that phase is so long, about how it is going to present itself in the lives of our people. Societies either go forward or back; they do not stay the same.

908. My own view — you know this Roisin because we had this conversation at the event up in Stormont recently — is that, until and unless people like you are in government designing and implementing the right policies, we will struggle further, because I do not think that, in the round, our Government have the capacity to know how to define and put into operation the right programmes that have the right ambition and vision that Johnston spoke about, or to deal with the issues of delays, the absence of transparency and appeal process that you also talked about. I do not think that our system has the capacity, and that was my experience as a Minister. There are very good people, and some are very good at what they do in terms of the radical edge of government but, in the round, it is managing and not really changing. My view is that, until human rights organisations, business organisations, community and voluntary organisations or the NGO sector are in the life of government through a huge secondment strategy, the Government will continue to struggle, even if they had the right policies.

909. You are also right to nail the issue of relationships; it all comes down to that. Interface is about relationships; parade disputes are about relationships and whether they are respectful or not. That is at the core of the politics at the interfaces, the parades and everything else. By the way, I think that the narrative that the three people presented today has to be at the core of the overview of T:BUC when the time comes to write a report.

910. Trying to get back to the particulars of the inquiry, I ask you to comment on three things, and I think that they are immediate in terms of T:BUC, despite all its limitations. I was on the Executive when T:BUC was presented as more than it is, and a number of us at Executive level tried to make these points: do not exaggerate what this is; do not be extravagant about it; say

what it is as a step in the right direction and let us build on that. Whether we can build on that comes down to the three questions that I would like you to answer. First, Johnston, you made the comment about steering T:BUC into Peace IV to fund narrow areas. Can you say more about that, because I think that there is great concern that that is what is happening? Secondly, there are the three issues that were named — delays, absence of transparency and appeal process — so that, when we come to deal with the granular of T:BUC as well as the overall issue and ambition of T:BUC, we can deal with both sides of that coin. So, the three issues for Peace IV are delays, absence of transparency and the appeal process.

911. **Mr Price**: The SEUPB must have heard a wide range of views from across the board about what should go in to Peace IV, yet it looks so similar to T:BUC. Clearly, therefore, it was designed for Peace IV to be the pot of money that would cause T:BUC, when something as central as a shared future should not be a central government concern for funding and should not be the last piece of European money to do that. I do not know what stage the Peace IV process is at now, but it must be very well on. A simple thing is that, lots of projects that were funded around dealing with the past under Peace III, in my judgement, could not be funded under Peace IV simply because of the way that the programme was being structured because of the way that it was being informed by T:BUC. So, I do not know whether the opportunity remains to take some positives out of the Stormont House Agreement and have a higher set of ambitions for Peace IV.

912. The experience of OFMDFM distributing money is all a bit of a mystery, to be honest. You tend to take the best possible judgement that it is so convoluted and difficult that the conclusion is that it is not about poor administration and that there are obviously more complex problems in the system.

913. The very first moneys that OFMDFM brought to bear in relation to interfaces was the peace walls programme. There was something systematically wrong with that because it was put together on the assumption that one side would come together with another side, and, somehow, that was always the dynamic round an interface, without any recognition that there are also existing organisations that are developing shared space. So, the thinking behind that was very crude, but things started to get worse when OFMDFM started to give out some of their resources. In a rush to get some moneys to underpin T:BUC, the first round of money was for three months, yet the three-month period was virtually up before any decisions were made on that. When you were less than happy with the decision, and you felt as if you were putting something in, were working on a key interface and your work was being recognised by other people, there was no appeals process or opportunity. The problem with that is not just the frustration that it leaves for unsuccessful applicants — we have all been unsuccessful applicants; we are well used to that — but it gives rise to talk about what is going on. How is money being allocated? Why is it being allocated? What sort of deals are being done? It is very unusual to have a funding programme these days without an appeals process built in.

914. **Ms R McGlone**: It has been particularly difficult. Johnston and I share a frustration because you cannot count the unburned buses and you cannot count the riots that did not happen at the Whiterock parade. Whereas, we look at other areas where there is trouble and, there is the thought that, if the money is not coming to us, it must be going to them. Because there is no transparency, we are sitting scribbling around for fivers here or tenners there or running mobile networks, and we see other areas getting money, and we think, “Where is the transparency?” Where is the investment in what does work? We are investing in people who are volunteers. All the networks that we work on are mainly volunteers. Both our organisations are operating on skeleton staff. We are a major interface,

we have had major successes, we have done major work over the years, yet there is absolutely no recognition. Then, when we applied to OFMDFM, we heard absolutely nothing for nine months and then we did not hear anything for a year, and it is coming up to this time when we will go through the same process again. That is our experience each time. It opens up the question of whether there is another agenda. Maybe you can tell us. We do not know but we wonder, because of the lack of transparency, whether there is another agenda or something else at work.

915. **Mr Price**: I want to make it very clear that I have no objection to any of the grants that were made to the organisations.

916. **Ms R McGlone**: I do not know any of them.

917. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We had said —

918. **Mr Price**: My concern is around the process and the lack of confidence that it gives rise to. I also think that we get quite a lot of recognition for the work that we do in Forthspring and, on occasions, we manage to access resources, but it is always a struggle and continues to be one.

919. **Ms R McGlone**: We have been sporadically, and we are still here 24 years later; actually, it is coming up to 25 years. What frightens me slightly about Peace IV is that the most innovative work that we did was with the Peace money. When we got the Peace money, we started the mobile phone networks, did the peaceful protest on parades and did trust-building processes with people from north and west Belfast, and they have kept those relationships going. What worries me is that it was never linked with government, and my concern is that, if it is now starting to be linked in with government and we get caught up in a government agenda, it will be risk-averse, there will not be any innovation, there will not be any aspirational stuff in it and there will not be room for people to come up with ideas. It is an old saying but it is like turning on a sixpence, because, if an organisation comes to us tomorrow and says, "There is a problem down the road", we can immediately start working on it. It does not cost anything. You just go out there, meet people, bring people together and see what you can do because you have the infrastructure and the networks there and you have people who you can tap into all the time. If this starts to be linked to government objectives and we do not think that the government objectives are right, what will happen then?

920. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We tend to hear two things about the funding structure. The first is that, because of the way that it is done at the moment, money tends to come in very late in a financial year. You have maybe been promised money but you could wait three, six or nine months before you get it, and that obviously has its problems. The other point is about the three-year cycle and the question of why it is only three years. If you have proven the need, which you have done, to get the money —

921. **Ms R McGlone**: Mike, three years is very, very unusual. We work on year-to-year funding.

922. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I listened to Caroline talking about three years. I know that some people get 12 months or 18 months. The health service will be funded for the rest of our lives. We know that. Sectarianism will not be tackled through a three-year cycle. If you have proved that you have a scheme that will meet a need, why is the funding not effectively open-ended with the checks and balances in the monitoring and evaluation? Rather than say that it is for three years, we could say that it is open-ended but that, when we think you have met the need, we will come to you and give you three, six or nine months' notice so that you can inform your staff and can prepare for the inevitable outcome of success. I do not get it.

923. **Mr Lyttle**: Apologies for my delayed arrival today. The Forthspring submission states:

"There should be co-ordination of reconciliation efforts on a regional basis … facilitated by a regional body that is independent from government. The regional body should be tasked with the management and efficient delivery of long-term funding as well as developmental support for organisations and individuals within communities."

924. Do you see an action in T:BUC that will deliver that recommendation and/or can you propose how it should be achieved?

925. **Mr Price**: It is not evident in T:BUC, no. We do not know what will happen with the negotiations and discussions around the equality and good relations commission, but there is an assumption that that body will not have a lot of those functions and will not have the funding to do it. In the absence of politicians coming up with something whereby it can be transparent and is not all about deals, the best measure at the minute is to have some independent body. There was criticism of the Community Relations Council in the past, but I think that it has performed its function well in the last number of years. It was a good funder to work with through Peace III. It was supportive. It has also reassured people that it has a much more inclusive notion of good relations and community relations. I certainly was one of the critics of what I am very reluctant to refer to as the "community relations industry" or whatever. I think that things have moved on from that. I probably would not look past the Community Relations Council for something that could carry out that function and do it well.

926. **Mr Lyttle**: Yet it looks like T:BUC proposes to remove some of those functions from the Community Relations Council, if OFMDFM ever agrees on legislation to bring forward in relation to an equality and good relations commission. That is helpful.

927. One would like to think that, notwithstanding a complete lack of detail on the proposals, the like of the urban village or the United Youth programme may go towards beginning to address some of the issues that you raised around social and economic infrastructure and interfaces being vital. As organisations on one of the biggest interfaces in Northern Ireland, what has OMFDFM's biggest interaction been with you in relation to the delivery of those types of programmes in your area?

928. **Mr Price**: The answer is not a lot at the moment. The value of those types of developments is that, even locally, things have clearly improved with the arrival of the E3 centre at Belfast Metropolitan College. There is the proposed innovation centre from Belfast City Council, but, beyond that, there is nothing really.

929. **Ms R McGlone**: Same here. I suppose that I have been to one or two meetings, one recently at Stormont. You were at it, Alex, and I met Alex and Megan there. Prior to that, there has been absolutely no involvement at all, and there has not been any funding and we have not been approached in any way about any of the work that we do.

930. **Ms Murphy**: No, we have not. It is a monolith up there. We have not had much interaction.

931. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you feel cherished for your expertise?

932. **Ms R McGlone**: Certainly not.

933. **Mr Lyttle**: I find that pretty surprising. I do not know where to go from there. We obviously have a lot of work to do to try to mobilise the type of expertise that we have on some of those issues in key areas. We continue to do the best that we can to get greater detail in relation to the key proposals that make up the T:BUC strategy. I share your frustration and concern about the lack of detail and lack of interaction around some of those issues.

934. **Ms R McGlone**: Chris, we have an opportunity here to sell from the rooftops some of the work that we have done here. Our organisation has been approached to speak at conferences all over the world on different things that we have developed. NI, or the North plc has a real opportunity here. There

are some really innovative and brilliant things that have happened here that could be sold abroad, and we are not capitalising on it.

935. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I think that we are about done, folks. Given that we are gathering evidence for a report, it might be useful for you to tell us what you would like to read as a headline in that report. Maybe Caroline will go first.

936. **Ms Murphy**: I would like to see that OFMDFM and the politicians are, for once, in tune with what is actually happening on the ground. Big words, big phrases and big strategies are great, but I would like to see a meeting of minds and actions so that aspirations are translated on the ground. The only way that that can be done is by starting to talk to us on the ground.

937. **Mr Price**: The headline that I would like to see is a rewriting of T:BUC, adding an anti-poverty strategy to underpin it.

938. **Mr Terry Donaghy (Suffolk Community Forum)**: It is worse than we think.

939. **Ms R McGlone**: In some senses, I would love to read language that says something to people on the ground.

940. **Mr Maskey**: Go for it, Terry. Go ahead. You have been the quiet man here.

941. **Mr Donaghy**: It is worse than we think.

942. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That was a slightly down but maybe realistic, way to finish.

943. **Ms Murphy**: You are saying that, and I had that feeling of, "Oh gosh; this sounds very much like woe is us and what is going on?". We need to take away the fact that a lot of stuff needs to be done and a lot of talking needs to be done. A lot of attention needs to be paid to what is happening on the ground and to what good stuff is happening on the ground. What also needs to be taken away is that, yes, we are optimistic. We are knocked for six many times, but we will go on. We would just like somebody to listen and give us a hand to move on more smoothly.

944. **Mr Donaghy**: There is a lot of good work being done out there through communities. I have lived in Suffolk for 40 years and, when I grew up in the 1980s, it was bad. I am well in with Suffolk Football Club now, but about 10 years ago, our community was getting smaller and smaller, and we started opening it up to Catholics. There was resistance to it at the start, but now our team is 56% Catholic, and we field two teams.

945. **Ms R McGlone**: Are you winning any more? [Laughter.]

946. **Mr Donaghy**: Yes, we are actually eight points clear at the top of the league. We are looking to go into intermediate football next year. There is work there, but nobody knows that our team is 56% Catholic.

947. **Mr Price**: They do now. [Laughter.]

948. **Mr Maskey**: That is not the headline, by the way. Hansard, take note — do not take note.

949. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You are also top of the table.

950. **Mr Donaghy**: Yes, eight points clear.

951. **Mr Price**: That is a pretty good metaphor for sharing.

952. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Absolutely. Young people are getting on with it and are open for it, and that is great. Terry, Caroline, Johnston and Roisin, thank you very much indeed.

953. **Ms Murphy**: Thank you for the opportunity.

954. **Mr Price**: It was a long 20 minutes. [Laughter.]

955. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Yes, a political 20 minutes, Johnston.

18 February 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan

Witnesses:

Mr Gerard Deane	*Holywell Trust*
Mr Michael Doherty	*Peace and Reconciliation Group*
Ms Maureen Hetherington	*The Junction*

956. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I welcome Mr Michael Doherty from the Peace and Reconciliation Group, Gerard Deane from the Holywell Trust and Maureen Hetherington from The Junction. I am sorry to have kept you waiting. We had a very good session with your colleagues, and hopefully we will have the same with you. I ask you to limit your opening remarks to 10 minutes to allow for an exchange. Who is up first?

957. **Mr Gerard Deane (Holywell Trust)**: I will give a brief collective introduction, after which we can have a conversation.

958. Thank you for the opportunity to attend today. I welcome the publication of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy and the efforts of this inquiry, as do my colleagues Maureen and Michael. To inform our submission, we had an engagement process in the north-west. That prompted some lively and challenging discussion, which we have framed in our submission.

959. Crucially, throughout the process, we made the effort to place the discussion in a positive light. That was not always an easy task, but our submission is a synopsis of the lengthy discussions that took place. All participants have received a copy of that and are happy with its content.

960. We are of the opinion that the T:BUC strategy could be strengthened in a number of areas, but we are fully aware that it is the strategy that is in place to help positively to shape our society for the future, and we are committed to working with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and other partners to strive towards a society that is, as stated in the document, a united community based on equality of opportunity, desirability of good relations and reconciliation.

961. Each of our organisations — The Junction, the Holywell Trust and the Peace and Reconciliation Group — is a member of the DiverseCity Community Partnership, which is a collective of 11 community organisations based in Derry or Londonderry, each of which is committed to modelling the society that we wish to live in. Our diverse groups share and own a state-of-the-art building in the city centre, and we hope that that is a model for others on how people can work together for mutual benefit and for the creation of a truly diverse city and a place where difference is welcomed and celebrated rather than feared and rejected. We would be delighted to host one of your external Committee meetings at some stage.

962. In all the work of the partnership, we try to work in partnership with a range of organisations, formally and informally. That approach should be replicated to address some of our biggest challenges: namely, the creation of a healthy economy, having a safe place to live, learn and work, challenging the divisive issues of sectarianism and its visible manifestations and addressing the legacy of the conflict. Between us, we have relationships with a wide range of partners, from community partners throughout these islands and beyond to

educational institutions such as INCORE at Ulster University , Queen's University, Trinity College Dublin, and thought leaders such as the Young Foundation and the Irish School of Ecumenics. Our work is supported through a range of funders, including OFMDFM through our core funding received from the Community Relations Council (CRC), and others such as the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs.

963. As stated in our submission, and without going into the detail because I know that you have it in front of you, we have concerns about the strategy, particularly in the areas of resource; the development of the strategy and the lack of engagement on the development of such; the time frame for delivery, in that the document contains only three actions with defined timelines; some of the strategic connections; definitions of some of the terms; and concerns about reconciliation and the delivery detail needed, such as leadership and the political will to address the difficult issues. We also have a concern about the proposed merging of the CRC and the Equality Commission; the challenge with interfaces and the need to address not only the psychological but the physical interfaces; and the detail that is needed on implementation.

964. Rather than focusing on those concerns, we want to focus more on leadership and the need for leadership, and the need for good relations champions in government and in the political sphere. There is a need to detail the financial commitment made towards the strategy in the longer term, and I know that efforts have been made since the publication of the strategy. As for the ambition in the document, we recommend a longer-term view to achieve real change on challenging issues. We would love to see integrated education whereby the education of our children with those from a different background is the norm rather than the exception. We would also like the Civic Forum to be revisited as a way to refresh and formulate approaches to deal with difficult issues.

965. We are also aware, however, that the inquiry wants to examine models of good practice for good relations, to challenge sectarianism and to deal with the past. Please feel free to ask questions about a range of initiatives that we are involved in, including our diversity community partnership; the towards understanding and healing initiative, which is a project that engages people from all backgrounds and uses storytelling as a vehicle to address trauma and other legacies of the conflict; the city of sanctuary initiative, which is working towards recognising our city as a safe space for all; the garden of reflection project, which is creating a physical shared space with an associated programme, which is a partnership between our group, our Civic Trust and Derry City Council; the ethical and shared remembering project, which is a groundbreaking project that encourages us to remember ethically as we mark a range of centenaries; the interface monitoring forum, which operates in the city; the human library project and initiative, which encourages people to challenge their own prejudices by hearing from a range of human books; a city safari project, which encourages people to visit places in our city that they would not normally choose to visit; working in partnership with INCORE on the accounts of conflict project; the trauma memorialisation, which examines ways to engage positively on trauma in society; and other projects like the let's talk programme, cities in transition, our range of training and the resources that we produce. I will take a breath now.

966. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Good man. Thank you very much. Were you able to listen to the previous session?

967. **Mr Deane**: No.

968. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It will be reported by Hansard, so I do not want you to read the transcript and think, "Why did he not say that?". I think that Roisin, Johnston, Caroline and Terry are much more critical of T:BUC in a fundamental sense than you are. Maybe you are being more polite.

969. **Mr Deane**: We are much more civil. I do not think that it serves us well to come in here and be hypercritical. We have to realise that it is there, and the question is how we will work within its parameters. That is probably the way that we have to move forward.

970. **Mr Michael Doherty (Peace and Reconciliation Group)**: This is an inquiry, and we are here to help it rather than to ridicule what is going on. It would be pointless for us to do that. As organisations working at the coalface, we are looking to the future, and we really have not been consulted about what is going on on the ground. Maybe people do not understand some of the work that we have been involved in, because they do not know about it. That is why we welcome the opportunity to have that discussion. If we can possibly help, we are open for you to ask us any questions that you would like to ask

971. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: There is already a common theme with the Belfast experience: a lack of engagement by the Department in bringing forward T:BUC. I will ask the question that I asked previously: do you feel cherished by the Department?

972. **Mr Doherty**: Cherished? [Laughter.]

973. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Can you answer rather than react visually, because that does not translate into Hansard?

974. **Ms Maureen Hetherington (The Junction)**: It has been disappointing. Between us, we have over 100 years' experience of working in the field.

975. **Mr Doherty**: I have been at it since 1987.

976. **Ms Hetherington**: It would have been nice to have been able to share our experience and to have had a constructive conversation in which we could have outlined what is happening at grass-roots level. It is taken for granted. The community sector is sometimes seen as being less than others, yet expertise has been built up in that sector. I am talking about people who make a decision to work in the sector and the constant fight that we carry on our shoulders every day. There has to be recognition of the expertise in the sector and the choices that people have made to work in it. Dr Johnston McMaster and Dr Cathy Higgins are working with us, alongside people on our committee. There are educators, professors, doctors and people with MAs, but, most importantly, people who have been working for a lifetime at the grass roots, interface and coalface.

977. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If you had been presented with the T:BUC document before it was signed off and published, and the Department had said, "Maureen, have a look at that and give me your thoughts", what practical adjustments or amendments would you have come forward with?

978. **Ms Hetherington**: The documentation has so much of the usual language, but it is not followed through with strong actions on the ground. It proposes to set up an all-party group for dealing with the past, when that is one of the crucial areas that needs to be unpacked. Education is a huge area that needs to be looked at in great depth. There are so many areas in which we probably would have chosen different headlines and straplines. If I am honest with you, I find it hard to fit our work into any of the overarching aims. I would have to start to dovetail and work around them because of the work that we do, yet we are working across Northern Ireland in the border counties. I have concerns about many other organisations that are in exactly the same situation. It is difficult to fit in with work that I see as being already done by the statutory bodies. I worry that there is an opt-out of where work will be allocated and that the community sector will be left behind.

979. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Do you think that your work would qualify in achieving the objective of Together: Building a United Community.

980. **Ms Hetherington**: I do not want to be arrogant, but I know that our work happens on the ground. We deal with

trauma, and we have been working with very sensitive groups. We have been working with subaltern groups — those groups that do not have a voice. We have been doing a lot of work on trauma, helping for healing and working towards healing. The ethical and shared remembering project, for example, is also doing amazing work on how we look at how we remember. That gives people a language and a new way of looking at things and dealing with the past in a very constructive way. We have rolled out training to the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Northern Ireland Office and the Community Relations Council. A lot of statutory bodies are taking on the training. So we know that, at policy level, Peace III clusters have undertaken them as guiding principles. That is only a fraction of the work that we are doing. We know that it is working at different levels. We also work, all the time, with loyalists, republicans, victims of state violence and victims of paramilitary violence at all sorts of levels to bring them together.

981. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I ask the same question to you, Michael. What would you have said?

982. **Mr Doherty**: I will tell you what my first reaction was when I read the strategy. I read the section on summer camps. I was involved in summer camps in 1965, so there was absolutely nothing new for me on what a summer camp was going to be about. This is what struck me: there is a boys' club mindset going on here. My question was, "What are they going to do in these summer camps?" What is it all about? Is it about taking young people away in the summertime because of an issue with parades? What thinking went into the proposal on summer camps? We are working at the interface, taking people to residential centres and other places during the parades season. When I looked at the whole development of the shared education space, I wondered why we were avoiding integrated education and talking instead about shared education spaces.

983. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Why do you think we are doing that?

984. **Mr Doherty**: It is difficult to have integrated education; we are not focused on trying to change it because of resistance to it on the ground.

985. The lack of understanding of definitions also struck me. It was all great flowery language as far as I was concerned, but do we really understand what sectarianism is and how we are going to deal with it? We talk about the expertise on the ground and the lack of consultation. I brought a document for you, Chair: it is my fourth document on peace building, with my experience of working in the field. The lack of consultation is an issue. The document states that experts in the field — I do not want to be arrogant about it — were possibly ignored. I had to ask myself what it was that we were doing that we were not asked. What did we miss out on? It is partly to do with the fact that, when issues are going down in a city like mine, a lot of people look at our city as a model of good practice in many ways. However, just because we have a model of good practice does not necessarily mean that it will work elsewhere. I am the first to acknowledge that, particularly with parades.

986. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I will come back to that because it is a very important point, Michael. Gerard, I will ask you the same question slightly rephrased. There is still scope, and, if the Department is persuaded, it will, presumably, readjust. What should it be looking to change?

987. **Mr Deane**: Vision is the key thing. Generally, there is a good vision in the document. The roll-out and the practicalities of some of the suggestions fall short. There is a realisation that it is a politically agreed strategy, which was probably the best that could be done at the time. There is a real opportunity for risk-taking and leadership from community leaders and political leaders to say how they would like to do things a wee bit differently and to indicate the risks that they will take. Let us do things that go beyond the next step. Some of the headline actions here read as though some Departments will do some of this stuff anyway, so they will rebadge it as good relations. Let us be

a wee bit different and have a document that is purely about leading this society forward and changing how we think about ourselves. That is what I would have welcomed and could really have bought into.

988. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is interesting. We will only know that this has worked if it makes a difference on the ground. My question is this: what should we be doing up at Stormont? Should we be setting a vision, such as a shared future, and no more, and be saying to you that you should deliver it? Michael, you said that the way in which things are done in Derry might be different from the way they are done here. I made the point that the way in which you do it on the lower Newtownards Road would be different from way in which you do it on the Upper Newtownards Road. Is that the way to do it, or should we be doing what I think we are doing at the minute, which is to present the vision with a 400-page manual on how to deliver it, and woe betide you if you do not tick the boxes?

989. **Mr Doherty**: Let me think about tackling your question. If people are really serious about a shared society, I would say to the people involved in rolling this out that they should look at some of the serious issues that affect us, such as sectarianism, and how that could be understood by people. That means that you need to revisit the education system and where we are at.

990. We need to talk about looking at our politicians as our leaders and about how sectarianism is covert and overt. That needs to be brought out clearly, because it affects what is happening with parades and flags and the people who protested. Most of all, we need to look at how we will deal with the past and the definitions that still cause confusion, such as who is a victim. We need to go back to the drawing board on all that stuff and begin to look seriously at whether the people on the hill who will roll this out to us really know what they are asking us to do. At this point, I think that they really do not know what is happening on the ground and what it is like, because they have not looked seriously at the whole issue of sectarianism. I am hooked on that in a sense, because I feel that this has been the blocker for all of us. It has been what I call an avoidance syndrome. We have all cleverly learned the skill of avoiding dealing with the actual issue that divides us.

991. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Let me emphasise that I ask the following question as Chair of the Committee, not wearing a party political hat. If we took one of those issues, such as who is really a victim, what do you think would happen?

992. **Mr Doherty**: I reckon that you would more than likely be divided on it.

993. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: What would the impact be on the community?

994. **Mr Doherty**: It is having that impact as it is now. It is keeping us more and more divided. People need to look seriously at how their view is affecting what is happening on the ground. We need a more collaborative approach. I think that Gerard got it right when he talked about risk-taking. Some people are more likely to be left behind. It will be the sorry legacy of the conflict that some people will never be satisfied, but risk-taking needs to be involved.

995. **Mr Deane**: I agree with Michael, but this Committee needs to hold a broad vision, and it has to lead by example. You should make broad commitments about where you would like us to be as a society and say that we are heading towards it and that, within 10 years, we will start to look at it as a process. It is like saying that all peace walls will come down within 10 years. That is a challenge. Let us look at it as a process and say that, over 10 years, we will start the process of doing that, or that we will look at victimhood, survivors or however we want to define it. You should pick broad themes and look at them without being descriptive. Say that we are going to channel resources to do that work in communities, in Departments and in statutory bodies — wherever it is

appropriate to do it — and we will try to support it through the strategy. You should look at all the major issues. It is about making broad commitments.

996. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Gerard, you mentioned resources and financial commitments. Are the three of you clear in your own minds about the level of financial commitment and the amount of resource that is available?

997. **Mr Deane**: We are now, because Linsey Farrell called down to see us last week, so we have a broad figure in our heads, but, before that, we were not really clear.

998. **Mr Lyttle**: You can enlighten us then.

999. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You may regret saying that, Gerard, when the Deputy Chair gets going in a minute.

1000. **Mr Deane**: I think that a figure of £10 million being allocated to the strategy within the financial year was mentioned. We think that that is a good start.

1001. **Mr Lyttle**: Did they tell you what it is for?

1002. **Mr Deane**: No, it was not detailed. It was a broad figure.

1003. **Mr Lyttle**: They would not tell me either.

1004. **Mr Deane**: Our concern is that, for example, you pick one shared education campus, and that is your £10 million gone and another £10 million along with it.

1005. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Absolutely.

1006. **Mr Doherty**: One disappointing thing that sticks with us all is the roll-out of the tenders last year for some work from OFMDFM. People in the Peace and Reconciliation Group were left hanging, waiting on hearing word back that we had been awarded the tender, which we did not get. It looks like it was intended that we would never get it, because, as far as we understand it, there was no money in the pot. People were waiting for other money to come in, which did not happen. I could be totally wrong about that, but people like me were left with a bad taste in our mouths over the head of it, because we were depending on winning a few of those tenders, or at least winning the tender that we submitted.

1007. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I accept that that is how you were left feeling. Whether that is based on fact, of course, Michael, is not something that we have the data to back up.

1008. **Mr Doherty**: I understand that.

1009. **Ms Hetherington**: We put in an application, and, three months later, we have still not had word on whether or not we were successful. I just have a real fear. I know that money is really tight and has to be spent efficiently and effectively. I totally acknowledge that. I will probably be retired at some stage soon anyway, so it will not be a priority for me, but I have a great fear about the expertise in the field that will be lost and decimation in the community sector. I have a fear that so much expertise that has been developed down through the years will be lost as people try to find other means of survival, especially in that field.

1010. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It does strike me that, in your position, you would prefer to be told no early on so that you can plan and react to it rather than be left hanging.

1011. **Mr Doherty**: It would have been better for us, and it certainly would have been better for me.

1012. I will say something else so that you get a sense of where we are at on the ground. Our understanding of the peace process is that the people were willing the politicians to get the agreements and get it all worked out, but it was people like us who were left on the ground trying to work through those agreements, and we were left out on the street, working to try to get all this stuff sorted out. With the flags protest last year, for example, a large number of people were involved with us in trying to settle all that stuff on the street. A lot of issues were going on, and there was expertise on the street. If it had not have been for the peace work

that was going on, I do not know where we would be.

1013. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your presentation. Our friends in Derry/Londonderry/Legenderry are showing great examples of really good work, and there seems to be a really good atmosphere in the north-west for a whole heap of key issues at the moment. I am grateful to you for your evidence today. I participated in a towards understanding and healing storytelling project and found it extremely worthwhile in challenging people to deal with difference and become comfortable with the different stories that people have to tell in Northern Ireland.

1014. You were polite and positive about the strategy, but your critique has been fairly robust. I welcome that because I share quite a few of the concerns. Your submission is also useful on lack of resources and lack of actions. Indeed, it states that there are three actions with detailed timelines, one of which was to review the good relations indicators by 2013. That is the way to test whether it is doing what it says it is aiming to do, and we have missed that deadline by quite a way. You also mention the disconnect between the strategy and community relations in practice. We need to find a way to address that. I do not think that the Committee changed that behaviour in a great way by turning down the evidence of one of our foremost community relations practitioners in Northern Ireland. All of us have to overcome that challenge together.

1015. I want to ask you a question about one comment. You say that the Community Relations Council is a valued and vital organisation in the promotion and delivery of good relations throughout Northern Ireland and that the sector supports the organisation and wants it to be sustained. Can you say a wee bit more about that?

1016. **Mr Doherty**: They are the only people who have been supportive of us on the ground. The organisation is a connect for us. It has brought us all together on strategic planning days, at times of concern and at conferences. We have gone through a series of thematic meetings with people from the Community Relations Council, and they are aware of the type of work that we are all involved in. They have been supportive of us since 1990 when other people were not.

1017. **Ms Hetherington**: Strategically, it has been crucial in bringing all the diverse voices together, including victims and survivors, which is no mean feat. It has had an input strategically and on the ground in giving support, and I have found that it has the expertise and has been willing to share. It has not just been about the core funding to help us to survive, but that has been an important part. There has also been advice and support, networking and wide connections. As Michael said, you can become very insulated when you are working in your own wee part of the world. The CRC allowed us to make the network much bigger and to exchange information and make our learning and sharing much wider. That has happened through so many different ways and approaches. It is a core body that knows what is happening at the grass roots. At the moment, it is looking at the decade of commemorations and has pulled together all the diverse groups, organisations and statutory bodies that are doing anything on commemorations. That input is invaluable on so many levels.

1018. **Mr Deane**: I declare an interest as a recently appointed member of the Community Relations Council. I think that it is an important organisation, and it is vital that there is an organisation that has a Northern Ireland-wide remit that holds the vision for the work that goes into community relations and holds the challenge as well. Michael and Maureen have captured most of the stuff.

1019. **Mr Lyttle**: I was not aware of your membership.

1020. **Mr Deane**: It has only been since December.

1021. **Mr Lyttle**: I was not intending to set that up in any way. Obviously, T: BUC proposes to take the funding function

and put it into a funders group, as far as I can ascertain from the level of detail available. It proposes to put the independent scrutiny role into an equality and good relations commission if and when legislation comes forward to deliver that. Where do you think that this leaves the Community Relations Council with the role you believe it should be playing in the delivery of community relations in Northern Ireland?

1022. **Mr Doherty**: Can I be so bold as to say that the people who thought of changing the Community Relations Council to bring it into the Equality Commission obviously did not know about the work that was going on in the Community Relations Council.

1023. **Mr Lyttle**: It was not me, just to make it clear.

1024. **Mr Doherty**: No, I am making a general point.

1025. **Mr Lyttle**: I would like to make that clear because I do not agree with it.

1026. **Mr Doherty**: The fact that people had a lack of understanding of the role of the Community Relations Council gives me cause for concern. Why would you want to change something that has been working? I believe that, had it not been for the Community Relations Council supporting us on the ground, we would not have been as far on as we are with the peace process. The point I want to make is that this conflict has been transformed to be less violent, but it is not a post-conflict situation and is not over yet. I would like to see the Community Relations Council staying as it is and not being changed and subsumed into the Equality Commission. Let the Equality Commission be a stand-alone commission.

1027. **Ms Hetherington**: I think that the board representation of the CRC is diverse and is a microcosm of what is reflected in the wider community. I think that it is a stand-alone body and that it gives support at the grass roots, but it is also strategic, so it works from the top down as well as from the bottom up. I think it would be a shame to lose the expertise, and, more importantly, the trust built up over years where people who have been working in the field and need that support can get it from somebody who can help and support with regard to policy at local level as well as at top level.

1028. **Mr Deane**: It is really strange that a strategy recommends what an independent charity should be doing and says that the Community Relations Council will be merged with the Equality Commission. I think that this was a step beyond, because this is an independent organisation. I realise that, in the future, the organisation might need to change, but it is independent and it should decide what it should do in the future. That is just my opinion.

1029. **Mr Lyttle**: I have a closing question: have you had any indication that the gross mistakes in relation to the administration of the good relations fund in the last few financial years will not be repeated in the forthcoming financial year?

1030. **Mr Deane**: We did meet Linsey Farrell. As I mentioned last week, she called down and gave us a general update on the plans for delivery. She reassured us that lessons have been learned, it is fair to say.

1031. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am not questioning your views on the CRC, but, Gerard, the point is that, in fairness, if it was created by government, then government has to have the right to uncreate it or merge it.

1032. **Mr Doherty**: Yes, of course.

1033. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have very strong views, quite rightly, on whether this was a good idea or not, and that is perfectly acceptable.

1034. **Ms Hetherington**: Unfortunately, down through the years, too many people have had a say on what is peace-building and what is not. People who may not be fully informed are making decisions, and I think you need to have a body that does have a long experience and knows what is happening at the grass roots to be

able to make the best informed choices on where the funding goes.

1035. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Going back to my point, is it our function to set a broad direction of travel and vision that can then take a shape that is different in different parts of the country? You give meaning to that vision, and we should not get too hung up about saying that we are very prescriptive in how we see this happening but need to be a bit more relaxed and mature about saying that it will be different here than it is there, but that it is all good. How is it in Derry at the moment? What is the interface situation like?

1036. **Mr Doherty**: The interface situation, at the minute, is fantastic. At our last interface meeting, there were no reports of any incidents whatsoever, and that has been the same since last August.

1037. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Why is that, Michael? Do you know?

1038. **Mr Doherty**: I think it is because we have built up relationships over the past lot of years. I am just thinking back to the Beyond Hate conference in 1992, when relationships started to be built up in the city. That has made it easier.

1039. The interface forum meets every six weeks. It will meet next week. It meets before a parade. While the parade is on, there is a mobile phone network in operation. We then meet after the parade — the loyal orders, the respective interface groupings and the PSNI. It happens on a regular basis.

1040. I have a black spot with republicans in the city who are not on board with the peace process and seem to be hell-bent on destabilising it. We still have expulsions happening. We still have punishment beatings happening. You heard in our local media yesterday about the bomb that was planted deliberately to attract PSNI officers and, in my view, kill them. This is still happening up our way. Apart from that, our city is wonderful. In many ways, we have sorted out the interfaces and all the parading issues among ourselves because of those relationships in the past that have not been built up in many other parts of the North.

1041. **Ms Hetherington**: I do not think that you can underestimate the community and voluntary sector. We have such a vibrant community sector with a number of women's groups, self-help groups and mental health groups. There are so many people who feed in. When we were running this, we had to submit at very short notice, Gerard. We called two meetings, and there was a huge response and people who could not come along gave apologies. You have that vibrant voice of the community sector. That is civic society in action and it helps to support the work we do. It helps us to lead from the grass roots. It also helps at council level that we have a vibrant community sector that is always on the go.

1042. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We heard evidence from academics who said that, if you want to build a united community, the thing to not do is say to two people, "Will you both come to an event because you are different?". They say that the thing to do is to create an issue, such as good parenting, and say, "If you want to be a better parent, come to this meeting". Is that the way to do it? Is that the way that you do it?

1043. **Mr Doherty**: I am more proactive than that. I do not hide behind any other way of bringing people together. If you are going to come in to talk about sectarianism, that is what you are going to talk about. I am more direct and clearer in that, if I am involved in it, this is what I want to do. I am not for bringing people in to do flower arranging just for the sake of them meeting across the table. We can all do that. We can all create community choirs. Are we going to talk about the hard issues? I would rather that we talk about the hard issues. The other stuff will happen anyhow.

1044. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: And it works for you.

1045. **Mr Doherty**: No, I cannot say that it works for me. It works some of the

time. I try to make sure that we are really tackling the hard issues that other people are avoiding. I am not against flower arranging, community choirs or whatever, because all those things are natural. However, I want to have people in the room having the difficult conversation about what is really dividing us.

1046. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: In fairness, the evidence we were getting was about good parenting, perhaps to tackle educational underachievement, so it is a very important issue, Michael.

1047. **Mr Doherty**: I am not disputing that.

1048. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The interesting thing that I am hearing from you is basically that one size does not fit all.

1049. **Mr Doherty**: Yes. What I am asking is this: what about the radicalisation of young people today who are maybe being attracted into some of the paramilitary groups that have not gone away? That is a hard issue for me.

1050. **Mr Deane**: It is also about normalising society, so that bringing people together to do normal things is OK. That builds relationships and trust, and, over time, we get to address the issues.

1051. **Mr Doherty**: Where we are complementing each other is that we are all working at different levels, doing different things, at different times and with different people.

1052. **Ms Hetherington**: A lot of it is about respect. I do not want to avoid the hard issues. I am in the field of peace building. I do not want to stay in a comfort zone. We challenge, but it is about respect. It is about building up mutual trust and a code of ethics.I am glad to say, Chris, that it was in Towards Understand and Healing, because our training covered ethics at length, and that has to go across society. It is how you go about tackling the hard issues. For organisations that have built up trust and mutual respect over a long time, that is a really important part of peace-building, as well as being who we are and being allowed to be who we are.

1053. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I will ask one more question, on the more oblique approach, where you pick an issue, such as good parenting, as a way to bring people together. The event, such as the bringing down of the Union flag at City Hall, was used as an example of something that forces communities apart. After a short period, however, the people attending decided, “Well, I am not going to let that put me off, because I am becoming a better parent”. They come back, and there is a certain resilience. Would that also be the case with the head-on approach, or is there more danger and risk?

1054. **Mr Doherty**: It depends on the motivation. If you want to bring people together to be good parents, that is great; do that. If, by accident, other conversations take place, that is also great. What I am saying is this: there are times when you have to look at what is happening on the ground. Here is the challenge: would you speak to your enemy? Would you go into the same room? Would you speak to somebody who made you a victim? These are all hard issues. Let us talk about sectarianism. Let us talk about who is a victim. These are the hard issues that, on many occasions, we tend to avoid. When we avoid them, they just rumble on. For my part, I believe that we have another century of work ahead of us before, possibly, the end is in sight.

1055. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Another 100 years?

1056. **Mr Doherty**: Yes. We talked about a shared vision. What have we not got? We have not got a shared vision. For many in the republican camp, the vision is of a united Ireland. For many in the unionist camp, it is to remain with Great Britain. It is not a shared vision. What we are trying to do is share this space, but, while we are still a big threat to each other, that will be hard. We have not sorted out flags, parades, and — I will finish by saying — the past. We are allowing them to rumble on.

1057. **Mr Maskey**: Thanks for your candour and the wealth of experience you all bring to the table. That is very important, and it is one of the things I have been picking up on in the sessions so far.

1058. A lot of people are frustrated that the expertise on the ground has not been drawn on through T:BUC, not so much in its genesis, but in its shaping. This has to be corrected because, obviously, the work going on is invaluable. There are a lot of other people doing similar things as well, and we have to find a way of bridging the gap that quite clearly is there. I share that with you, so, hopefully, you can take that forward.

1059. I tend to go along with your way of thinking: if there is a problem, let us identify it and try to deal with it. Sometimes you have to find ways of doing that, because everybody is not at the same point, or some people may want to come at it a bit more subtly. I am interested in how the commission on flags and identity, which was agreed at Stormont at Christmas, is going to work out, because we could have 20 meetings that are just going to be shouting matches; it is going to happen. Obviously, you would expect such a commission to shape how that evolves. I am trying to reflect ahead, because, while it may not mean an awful lot to me, it might present an opportunity for a lot of people to have their say in a rational and mature way. I am not so sure what the outcome will be, because some people will still want to have their flag respected and others will want their identity manifested in a respectful manner.

1060. I see this as an opportunity in our peace process, probably the first in a long while, if not the first ever, for such a question to be put to people through some formal structure. The question of what to do about flags is always put to us as politicians. I represent people who have a view about flags, and they do not all hold the same view. Every elected representative here represents people with very firmly held views and who will hold us to account for defending their views. I am quite prepared to challenge the people I represent about those hard discussions, and I do so, on an ongoing basis . I am therefore looking forward to this, because I am interested.

1061. I do not expect you to comment on whether such a commission is a good idea, but how might you prepare for it or prepare the people you are working with to engage with it? For me, it is a platform for the hard questions to be put. People would be expected to give their views, if you know what I mean. I see this as being one of the first opportunities to send the challenge back to wider civic society and get their views on it. It is all very well saying that people are arguing over flags. People argue over flags because they mean so much. One of the things I have learned in politics over the last lot of years is that, unfortunately, symbolism sometimes means a lot more than substance. It frustrates the life out of me, I must say. But, I understand it, and I have to deal with it. Do you have any views on that? For me, that is part of the bigger picture we are dealing with, because T:BUC cannot just stand on its own. It has to link and relate to other parts of our environment. I wonder whether you have any views on how this might unfold or what your advice to people might be on how to engage.

1062. **Mr Doherty**: First, there needs to be a recognition that, when somebody feels that something has been taken away from them, they will resist more. Unionists are in the position where they feel that their flag has been eroded, so they are going to resist and look for support for their position. That was what happened in the 2012-13 period. It is about recognising that this is important to a lot of people. But, also, those from a unionist perspective need to understand that others have an issue with a flag that is not theirs, as far as they are concerned. When you start from the position of trying to remove a threat from one another, it is grand.

1063. Getting people to look at simple solutions could be a starting point. I could sort out the parades' issue tomorrow by giving two solutions and then letting one of the groups select who

will go first. The first solution is to allow parades to go into areas where they are not wanted. The second solution is for them not to parade in those areas. It is so simple and could be over tomorrow. But who is prepared to do it? Those are the hard discussions that facilitators and mediators need to be prepared to get people around the table to have a look at — the common-sense solutions that accommodate us all.

1064. Rather than trying to get agreements, we look for accommodations. One of the factors in this has been that people are trying to shove their decisions down one another's throats. It is just not working at the present time. There has to be some encouragement to look at accommodation and compromise.

1065. At the moment, it is not working. We have to look at why it is not working, Alex. It is not working because people have got themselves into fixed positions and are not prepared to move. How do you weaken those positions? This is me looking at what is called the best alternative to a negotiated agreement. Why does the Orange Order not come to the table to negotiate an agreement? It is because their better alternative is to let somebody else like the Parades Commission make a decision for them and then blame the Parades Commission. It is the same with the residents' group whenever the decision goes against them. Do not blame the Orange Order; blame the Parades Commission for the decision that went against you. We have to let people know that they are allowing others to make decisions on their behalf for their community. It is about encouraging people to have those internal dialogues, but they are feeling threatened.

1066. **Ms Hetherington**: I might add that knowledge is power. Community education equips people with a language, an understanding of where they have come from, and a deeper understanding of where they are and how they got there. They have to really understand all those things and unpack them.

1067. We have not done enough on memorialisation or memory work. History is more about psychology than facts. Facts are very limited, and there is an interpretation of history. When you start to get people to have a different dialogue from what they have been brought up on, and to find out their diatribe or what they have been digesting, that is a really important area.

1068. We have had very diverse groups coming in and starting to discuss this. When people start to unpack it and begin to understand where we have come from, and the deep legacy of the roots of violence, it frees them up to be more open to other possibilities. This comes back to the fact that if you do not feel that you are being heard or, possibly, that you cannot articulate what you are trying to say, it reduces things to a shouting match simply because you are limited in your own language.

1069. I am not trying to be insulting or to belittle, but there is a huge knowledge deficit out there, and, I am not saying that we are geniuses. A lot of the work that three of us do in different ways is basic grass-roots education. For example, we worked with a young parades group in the Waterside. They had been out marching and protesting, and we took them right back to the ice age to understand Ireland and all the different people who had come to the country. We took them right back to basics, because the education system has not been the best way for them to receive their education. It is about how we see ourselves and what we have been brought up on. It is about unlearning some of that stuff and those deep religious roots of sectarianism — the unpacking of all of that — and trying to see things differently and open ourselves up to other possibilities. It has worked.

1070. **Mr Deane**: If we get the rationale and ethics of it right to start with — the, "here is why we are doing it, here is what we are going to accept, and here is why we are asking you" — then it is back to some of the approaches towards understanding, healing and

ethical and shared remembering. If those are right at the start, and if people know what they are engaging in, and buy into the process, then it is less likely to be disruptive.

1071. **Ms Hetherington**: It is about the greater or common good. If you have basic principles, you keep going back to them.

1072. **Mr Attwood**: Thank you very much for coming. First, your comments about the CRC are timely. My party began to go down a wrong road in relation to the proposed equality and good relations commission. We corrected that some time ago and decided that the appropriate model is not to take away from the CRC and give to something else, especially to the Equality Commission, which has been struggling for a long time and continues to struggle. However, separate from that, the CRC is showing good authority, and we should now work to protect it. I hope that the proposed legislation does not come forward as a consequence of all that. As practitioners and people on the ground, your common message in that regard is useful and timely.

1073. Michael, we were all struck by your comments in respect of another century. I probably have different words that convey a similar sentiment, which is that we are in a phase where we are managing the conflict but not transforming it. Whilst we are much better than we were, for all the obvious reasons, in our politics and governance, and, probably, in many but not all parts of our community, we are just managing the conflict. It seems to me that it will take a long time.

1074. We do not seem to have the ability or ambition for the paradigm shift we require. We manage things, such as the Stormont House talks, and move some things forward, if all that evolves into what it is meant to be as opposed to what the limited words say it is at the moment; but I worry that we are in this phase.

1075. If this is your assessment in Derry, which is seen to be a city of leadership, then there are other places where it is more difficult. That came across in the submission from the previous group. Urban inner-city Belfast has an intensity and critical character that makes it not in as good a place as Derry, even though there are still issues in Derry.

1076. Separately, you talk about your observations on an ethical process for dealing with the past. I am worried that we have a structural process for dealing with the past that is not ethical, and that will be found wanting when it comes to ethics. Eames/Bradley was a comprehensive and ethical approach. I wonder if we now have a structural approach as opposed to getting behind all of that in the way that we should. It is seen, most acutely, in the Stormont House Agreement's attempt to suppress the patterns and policies of the past in relation to the activities of terror groups and state agencies. There is a clear attempt to suppress all of that in a very unhealthy way. That is not ethical, in my view.

1077. I will bring you back to the inquiry and ask the questions that I asked the organisations in the previous session. You touched on this, but I want you to elaborate. What is your experience of delays, the absence of transparency, the failure to have an appeals process around T:BUC and the assertion that an attempt is being made to steer T:BUC into Peace III in order to fund narrow areas? Those were the words used by one of the previous group.

1078. **Mr Lyttle**: Peace IV.

1079. **Mr Attwood**: Sorry, Peace IV. Do you have any observations on this? Do you have a sense of Peace IV being steered towards T:BUC and, if so, is that narrow?

1080. The second point is on the delays and the absence of transparency in the appeal process around the management of T:BUC to date. You referred to some of that when you mentioned making bids and not hearing anything for a year and three months, and making bids and then realising that it was all notional and that nothing was ever going to be funded anyway.

1081. **Mr Deane**: On the structural approach of the central good relations fund, it was a generally frustrating process that people really believed in at the start. They put a lot of effort into making quality applications, or so they thought, that were not supported, and people found that to be frustrating more than anything. It was not that the funding was not hitting the ground; it was the fact that we did not hear and could never get an answer. That was the frustrating thing. We accept that resources are limited, but, as was said earlier, a clean "no" is at times a lot handier than being held on and held on and held on.

1082. I think that this strategy needs to sit separately from Peace IV. Yes, it needs to reference it, but it should not look like it. It should not look like central government objectives are being met through European money. European money should be used for other things. For example, it should be used for some of the projects that are funded, and that we are involved in, such as Towards Understanding and Healing and the Garden of Reflection project. Those types of things are innovative and ground-breaking and should continue to be done through the Peace IV programme.

1083. I have a concern that this will be resourced through Peace IV. We feel that there should be a real commitment through government to say, "We value this strategy and, as such, we will commit the following resources to it in addition to Peace IV stuff".

1084. **Mr Doherty**: I concur with what Gerard said about Peace IV. The amount of money put into community relations from central government could be pennies compared with what is needed. If it had not been for European money — and I go back to the peace process — I do not think that the peace process would be as far on as it is. Central government needs to look seriously at the amount of money given to community relations work and at the European money as being add-on money.

1085. **Ms Hetherington**: I acknowledge that there is a huge struggle between the politicians and that it is very hard to come to an accommodation on decisions given the different constituencies. I understand the difficulties that that presents. It is even hard to get a document that is totally agreed on across the board.

1086. As Gerard and Michael said, this document can be about real partnership working between the politicians and the community sector. It could be the document that envisions how we might work together. We are all in this together. Peace is too important to be left to politicians alone, and it is too important to be just left at the grass roots. There has to be a coming together and a common ground. A document like this should be a stand-alone document, but it is a partnership. It is about saying, "We all need one another. We are all in this together. What are we going to do about the common good?". The vision here is very good and there are ways in which we could work.

1087. It has to stand separately from Peace IV. That can be the add-on, but here is a visionary document in which politicians are acknowledging the work at the grass roots, and the grass roots is acknowledging the difficulties in the way that politics works. This is the way we can pull it together. Sometimes, politicians cannot make the difficult decisions about who is a victim. Maybe we can help in that struggle. Maybe we are the ones who can carry the torch for that. With memorialisation and commemoration, maybe we are the ones that civic society has to strengthen, that need to get our act together, and that need to start to lead and support at the top.

1088. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That has been most useful, Maureen, Michael and Gerard. Thank you very much. I hope that you feel that it was worthwhile making the trip.

1089. **Ms Hetherington**: It was. I think that we feel that we have been heard.

1090. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Good.

11 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray

Witnesses:

Mr Gerry Burns	*Armoy Community Association*
Ms Lyn Moffett	*Ballymoney Community Resource Centre*
Ms Rose Smyth	*Causeway Rural and Urban Network*
Mr Colin Craig	*Corrymeela Community*
Mr Sandy Wilson	*North Antrim Community Network*
Ms Charmain Jones	*Rural Community Network*

1091. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: As we are doing this in a joined-up sense, from my left to right, we have Gerry Burns from Armoy Community Association; Colin Craig representing the Corrymeela Community; Charmain Jones from the Rural Community Network (RCN); Lyn Moffett, who is our host, from the Ballymoney Community Resource Centre — thank you very much; Sandy Wilson from the North Antrim Community Network; and Rose Smyth from Causeway Rural and Urban Network. Only the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland is not with us today. I am looking at you, Lyn, as our host, to make the opening remarks.

1092. **Ms Lyn Moffett (Ballymoney Community Resource Centre)**: I will, unless Charmain wants to.

1093. **Ms Charmain Jones (Rural Community Network)**: First, on behalf of the Rural Community Network, I thank Karen for contacting RCN and asking us to be the conduit today to bring rural communities here. We were asked, as an organisation, to have the meeting in an area of best practice. This was the first area that came to mind, with the linkages that I have with Ballymoney Community Resource Centre. I will just say thank you for hosting us today.

1094. **Ms Moffett**: We are very grateful for this opportunity as well. As you know, we made a submission to the inquiry. When we were invited to come along today to bring examples of best practice, the first people whom we thought of were the other community networks in the area because we all cover areas that are both rural and urban. Our work extends into all those areas. The work that we do, particularly on building community relations and addressing community tension, happens in all those areas. It is not just an urban issue.

1095. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: If people are content, we will start with that point. If a first-time visitor to Northern Ireland wants to know about these things in the urban situation, in Belfast or Derry/Londonderry, it is very easy. I would almost certainly put them in the car, drive them to a peace wall and say, "Well, there are you are." In a rural area, I am not so sure that I would know where to go.

1096. **Ms Moffett**: It might be obvious enough in the summertime when we have our cultural expression in full view with regard to how areas and flagged and the territorial markings that we see in certain areas. Very often, apart from that, you would not necessary be aware of it if you were not local to the area. It is the people who live in an area who know which streets they might like to avoid, which areas they would like to go through to the community centre or even which shops they shop in. It would be something that might be unique to each area.

1097. **Ms Jones**: We commissioned a research report in 2009 called 'Beyond Belfast'.

From that, the Rural Community Network has peace-building and good relations at the core; that is a main ethos of our organisation. The work that I do regionally across Northern Ireland is in what you would classify as a contested area, but, with regard to rural issues, it would be more subtle. The divisions might be not be as visible. There is a different way of working. I worked in the urban setting for about 10 years in Portadown and Armagh. I had to learn very quickly that, in an urban context, a spade might be called a spade; whereas in rural areas, there is a "say nothing" attitude. It is more subtle. I suppose that there may be less incentive in a rural area to come together because, at least, in an interface area — I live in an interface area in Portadown — when the wall is there, it gives you a focus to build relations of some sort, and there is an incentive to do that. When you live in a rural area, perhaps quite a dispersed rural area, there might be less of an incentive to come together. As Lyn says, we work across the whole of Northern Ireland. Rural communities are very self-sustaining; they have their own shops, post offices, garages and schools. There is sometimes less of an incentive to mix. Our organisation is about trying to do that.

1098. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I wanted to ask you about that unspoken element. If you are in an urban setting and there is a physical manifestation, that is one thing. If you are in a rural situation, is it largely unspoken, and, as you said, Charmain, you have to learn it.

1099. **Ms Jones**: It is not a one-size-fits-all situation. In some communities, we tried an exercise two years ago to map out rural contested issues. Week by week and day by day, we found something that a local village or town could change. A flag could go up in the area, and it automatically becomes contested; the flag comes down, and that goes away again. There could be a parade that normally does not happen. Then, it goes away again. Good-relations issues in rural areas are constantly shifting. You have to learn. You have to be very close to the ground to try to feel what the local issues are. It is not as in your face sometimes; it is subtle.

1100. **Ms Moffett**: Nevertheless, we could definitely point to occasions when what is happening on the wider political scene comes right down to our local areas. We see that playing out in local estates and villages.

1101. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Can you give an example?

1102. **Ms Moffett**: Well, the obvious one is the flag at Belfast City Hall and how that affected our work locally; it made a huge difference to people's willingness to engage with cross-community work. Where they had been willing before, there was almost a cessation of that willingness to work across communities.

1103. **Ms Jones**: After the flag protests, I would have had some people, particularly in quite small rural areas, using the sort of World War I phrase of "going back into the trenches"; the retraction from any type of cross-community work. I find that what happens in a larger city definitely radiates down to a very local level.

1104. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is interesting that you chose that example because a previous witness was talking about working in an urban setting. He was trying to bring people from either side of a peace wall together, not because they were different, but because they all wanted to be better parents. That was the reason for their coming together. The flag came down at the city hall and there was a hiatus when people went back to their trenches, but because of the value of the scheme, they said, "Well, I am not going to let that derail me" and they came back in.

1105. **Mr Colin Craig (Corrymeela Community)**: There is added complexity with the rural environment because, in my work, there is often a memory, in a sense, of cooperation because of the farming connections, which people talk about at one level. Then, there is a geographical separation whereby it

is not as up close and personal as it often is in the urban environment. When people reach across and meet up and you get into programmes where you find connections, the relationships are there. However, it is also much harder for them to sustain that relationship because, often, if you are working with older people and rural transport issues, they do not just walk across; there are miles of separation. Going out at night to meet people regularly can be an issue. There are subtleties to the rural environment that are very different from those in the urban environment.

1106. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How would you characterise how farming cooperation has changed in recent years?

1107. **Mr C Craig**: I cannot actually talk specifically about that, but, often, there are memories of sharing equipment and moving across things. They speak of that. Then, it is your time of year, and you go and do what you need to do. Perhaps, many in the rural community did not directly experience as much of the violence as some urban areas experienced.They did experience violence, but it was more of an absorbed fear through witnessing the external story, and they pulled back from each other at times. They also have a love for the land, which is a deep bridge for them. They connect on other points, which is interesting.

1108. **Mr Gerry Burns (Armoy Community Association)**: I do not think that the people in Armoy understand the word "subtle": we are one sort or the other. We have been there. Anybody I knew was of my side; anybody I did not know was of the other side. We talked among ourselves and did not know each other. We have a long history of division in the place where I am from. The road through it splits one community from the other. In 1911, it was the only ward in the whole of Ireland that was 50:50. It is now 55:45.

1109. I was reared on a small farm of 14 acres. The Protestant farmers chose to rent land to my father. He and I appreciated that, but, in many other aspects, we were a very divided community. On the street that I live on in Armoy, in 30 years of the Troubles, I maybe walked up it twice. We have a place transformed today, but it has been a difficult struggle. I am delighted to be here as part of Building a United Community because we are from a diverse community. We have three Orange lodges, a Masonic lodge, three churches, three church halls, the Gaelic club and the rugby club. At one time, Corrymeela and Rathcoole had places within a few miles of the road that goes down through Armoy. There was division and sectarianism, but the place has been changed and transformed.

1110. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I will come back to you, Gerry, on how you achieved that.

1111. **Mr Sandy Wilson (North Antrim Community Network)**: If I was asked what we do at the North Antrim Community Network, I would say that we build people. That is your starting point. Building with bricks is sometimes important when needs are identified, but building people is the most important thing. Alongside building people, you have to build respect.

1112. I will go back to what Colin said about ownership. There are great opportunities in this time of austerity in service provision and community planning to get a renewed sense of ownership. Whether people own a house or a car, it is theirs, and they care for it and look after it. There are great opportunities in communities when the focus is on areas rather than groups. There is a fundamental difference.

1113. Some people, politicians and parties would say that there are too many groups. All those groups are trying to do wonderful things, but they need to work together. We encourage them to develop forums. In some places, they are working not only in their own communities but in other communities. It is vital to build relationships in your own community to have the confidence to work outside your community.

1114. When we talk about rural areas, we are talking about villages that might be only three miles apart. In times of austerity, people in government think that they are funding this community group or that community group and so on. However, we are already working together on the ground, teaching groups about collaborative working. There is less funding, so it is more important to work together to become more competitive in a difficult funding environment. When you are building people and respect, you build confidence, and, when you build confidence, you might then be able to make progress in good relations.

1115. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: The expression "building people" is troubling me a little, Sandy: what do you mean?

1116. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: When building people, you have to build their knowledge and capacity. I think that we have gone beyond building capacity nowadays. We have to build tenacity. By tenacity, I mean that people have to be resilient and have to work together, and the most important people with whom they should be working in their local area are their democratically elected councillors. I know of some wonderful examples of those relationships building, and, in the challenges that we have — I say challenges rather than problems — if we work together, we can begin to make further progress on all the issues in all our communities. The key is to focus on areas rather than groups and ensure that groups work together, whether as an umbrella organisation or otherwise. If they work together as an umbrella organisation, that makes it much more receptive and accessible to work with government agencies. Bear in mind that, as we keep telling groups in our communities, at this point, all 26 councils have about 4% of the Budget in Northern Ireland. We tell them not to keep knocking on the doors of councils because there is roughly 96% of the Budget in the Departments, although it is very competitive, and there are restrictions and all the rest of it. If they do not always knock the doors of councils but work together, they will have a stronger voice and can go further afield. Respect your councillors and your council officials and work with them to encourage that collaborative working.

1117. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: We are three weeks away from the big change when we will have the 11 new so-called super-councils. Rose, you are Causeway —

1118. **Ms Rose Smyth (Causeway Rural and Urban Network)**: I am from the Causeway Rural and Urban Network.

1119. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have the Causeway Coast and Glens coming in.

1120. **Ms Smyth**: Yes. My project is very much focused on the borough of Coleraine. I work closely with probably the most marginalised communities in our borough. Over the past couple of years, I have delivered projects to people in bands, bonfire builders and unattached nationalist youth. I go back to what Charmain said in that the end result, which is the resilience that Sandy is working towards, is just not there in the groups that I work with. I was in Garvagh for two years on a project that looked at reducing the number of flags and exchanging them for banners. In the middle of that, the flag issue at the City Hall came up. I worked for a long time with guys from two sets of bands, and I was struck by the fact that they were from all over the rural hinterland around the Garvagh/Aghadowey area. They were in several different bands and were often in bands that did not come from where they lived but had been their grandfather's band and stuff like that. There were so many areas that, in their heads, were no-go areas. They were completely paralysed by family traditions and issues such as who owned which house, who owned what farm, whose shop it was, where they would go and where they would meet. That was in contrast to other work that we were doing in the same village with more resilient young people in the more mainstream youth club and who did a wider range of activities. Work still needs to be done, but we need to find

the best practice and really good work that can work for such young people to increase their resilience to come together.

1121. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How do you do that? How do you approach a young person who says, "I do not go down that road because my father and grandfather did not, and it is not my/our road"?

1122. **Ms Jones**: We have done a few bits of work with YouthAction Northern Ireland, and those difficult conversations have formed part of the programme. YouthAction does some really good youth engagement in rural areas. On a couple of occasions, I have worked with different groups of young people and have had similar conversations about their feelings that a shop, a street or a field in their area was a no-go area. There were even cases of fighting or feeling threatened because of uniforms when walking down a village street on opposite sides.

1123. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: A school uniform?

1124. **Ms Jones**: Yes. We had a conversation with a group of young people last week about groups meeting when going up or down a hill and how they brush past each other on the way past. There is eye contact but nothing physical. We talked about that kind of stuff to find out how young people feel.

1125. You asked me how we engage them. You ask them and talk to them. Many a young person will say to me, "I have never had the chance to speak about this. Nobody else has asked my opinion". If you create that safe space and allow them to discuss the issue and to vent their concerns, maybe they will not go home and tell their parents that, but, in a youth group setting in a safe area, they will discuss it. It is about trying to talk to them and engage on their level. We have talked about loads of issues across rural Northern Ireland. We have talked about shared education, flags and emblems and parading. I have had conversations with young people in rural areas about every issue that you could think of, and they are just glad of the opportunity to express themselves. Young people sometimes get a bad press. I was a youth worker for four years, and I am an advocate for young people. I think that young people have their place in society, and their voices should be heard. I am always encouraging young people to explore their own community and where they can and cannot go.

1126. **Ms Smyth**: There is a lack of resilience. You said that it was about listening. That mindset had to come from somewhere. Sometimes, it can be seen to be linked to the cultural issue, but it will go beyond that: it will go to low self-esteem, their view of the world, educational attainment and life experience. However, the fact is that there is still a pool of young people who are living in a very closed in and paralysed mindset. Charmain mentioned what it is about: getting really good youth work in, listening and seeing how that can start to be built on to widen their world, because it is in widening the world that you will start to —

1127. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You and Sandy are very clear about the need for resilience. That leads me to wonder whether single identity work needs to be emphasised to build up resilience and capacity before you try for cross-community work, or should you go straight for the ultimate goal.

1128. **Ms Moffett**: We had a long conversation about that while we were waiting to come in.

1129. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is there an answer?

1130. **Ms Jones**: We all had different answers.

1131. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Six different answers.

1132. **Mr Burns**: We had no choice, because it was a divided community. We were a single group with mixed identity. With regard to the funding programme for peace and reconciliation, we could not get money to work with ourselves. We

saw groups going on all sorts of trips and doing wonderful things, but, when we applied to get money for our group in Armoy, that was really difficult for cross-community work. That is what our community is; we are a mixed community, a community abandoned and a community with no political representation for decades. I was 18 years old on 5 October 1968. Twenty-six years later, on 5 October 1994, I was invited by a Church of Ireland minister from Drumcree to go to a meeting to set up a community group that was started because we had a summer scheme. Those were difficult days.

1133. When I was five and going to school, council houses were being built. Today, 61 years later, the people living in those houses are still waiting for the Housing Executive to extend their kitchens. That is the sense of abandonment right across the board in an interface rural area. We have worked so hard to put in infrastructure. You may ask me what the secret was at the end of it. The secret was a community regeneration and improvement special programme (CRISP), funding from the IFI and DSD, with real people round the table with an agenda who were able to deliver.

1134. You may ask what effect the grand political scheme had. In October 2000, Tony Blair came to support David Trimble at a meeting — at the Waterfront Hall, I think. The night before that, our community office was burned to the ground. That was when we were planning the opening of Tilly Molloy's. We got three phone calls of sympathy because, two weeks previously, the Catholic primary school was petrol bombed, and I was on the board of governors for that school. We opened a facility, and the consensus was that it would never work. Not only might it not be supported but it would be destroyed. I am very grateful to the people in the CRISP scheme, the funders and the people round the table at that time who supported us. The funding environment and the support environment from 1994 to 2004 was a lot better than it is today.

1135. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you, Gerry.

1136. **Ms Moffett**: One of the examples that Gerry brings to the table shows how good practice is not necessarily rewarded. We are probably all involved in both single identity and cross-community programmes. We would probably describe many of those as being good practice, but we really feel that we have to start moving very distinctly towards cross-community work. We are finding that, if estates become entrenched, the single identity work "concretises" — I am sure that that is not a real word — the attitudes that already exist. Rather than building confidence to come out and espouse other groups, it is entrenching ideas and ideals.

1137. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is maybe a key element that you are taking us to, Lyn. I think that it is right that OFMDFM and Stormont, as the devolved government, say, "We have a vision, and, in this case, the vision is of a shared future, and we are calling it T:BUC — Together: Building a United Community". However, we have to consider how that is brought into being. It is maybe not for us to say, "Here's a 400-page manual with 600 tick boxes; get on with it". It is maybe to say, "How are you going to do it?" I say that because the way that Gerry does it in Armoy might be different from the way that Sandy does it. Somebody might say, "Actually, where we are, the people whom I represent need single identity for a few months to build up resilience capacity". Other people might say, "No, I know how to do it with my people", and that will be very different. Do you feel that you have that sense of control over the way in which you deliver?

1138. **Ms Moffett**: It is entirely right that one size does not fit all. "Criticism" is a strong word, but one of the criticisms that we might make of the strategy is that there is not enough involvement at civic and community level for us to inform some of the ideas as to how T:BUC might be rolled out. I do not know what other people might say.

1139. **Mr C Craig**: Let me put a little bit of history into this. I was on the Community Relations Council (CRC) board when we were transitioning from Peace I to Peace II. We are about to go to Peace IV. Peace II was explicitly meant to be cross-community in orientation, because Peace I had put a huge investment into time and creating an environment in which you could have your space and your time. There was a huge outcry at that moment. People were saying that they were not ready. So a lot of Peace II went into single identity work. Peace III was heavily colonised by single identity work. The danger for those in leadership is that you are creating a ghetto that people stay inside. It is a funding ghetto. Why should people move? Unless you set up the stretch goals that allow us to motivate and guide, it will not happen, because they are comfortable. We all get comfortable in our own world. Unless we stretch, we will go round and round in circles. I think that part of the weakness of T:BUC is that, whatever the negotiation behind it, it went for the lowest hanging fruit. I was doing summer schemes with young people in the 1970s, for instance.

1140. Contact is critical, but we know, through education for mutual understanding (EMU) and all the research, that contact on its own is not enough. We need more: a higher level of aspiration in the funding and innovation. Innovation has to be funded and not be the same old, same old attitude. You mentioned outcomes. Part of the risk is that we have to give some freedom to explore and to get it wrong. To do this work, there are no guarantees; there is no 400-page manual. You will do something with the best of intentions, and we, as the practitioners, need to put our hands up and say, "We thought this, but it was wrong".

1141. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Lyn raises the important issue of pre-T:BUC consultation. I am going to go across the table, starting with Rose. Rose, I will phrase it in two parts. First, do you feel that you had something to offer to the design of the T:BUC policy? Secondly, did you have an input before it was published.

1142. **Ms Smyth**: Yes and no. We had no consultation whatsoever.

1143. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: I had no involvement, but my manager was involved.

1144. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Your manager was involved in the design of the —

1145. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: With the rural support networks.

1146. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Lyn?

1147. **Ms Moffett**: Yes and no, as per Rose. We certainly feel that we could make an input with other groups like ours, but we did not get the opportunity.

1148. **Ms Jones**: We were consulted, which was great. We are funded by the Community Relations Council, which, I have to say, being a lone worker in rural development, has been a critical friend. As Colin said, there are many days on which you make mistakes. No manual comes with the job, so the CRC allowed us to have the door opened for our engagement. I looked at the level of our engagement with officials during the design of T:BUC and the co-design stage, and we have had an excellent relationship with OFMDFM officials. We had Donna Blaney and Linsey Farrell, who engaged with us in a number of meetings. We had Gavin King, who now sits as part of our Beyond Belfast steering group. We constantly feed into what is happening. Our Beyond Belfast group has a wide range of stakeholders across rural Northern Ireland, whom we meet every couple of months. That flow of information is still happening.

1149. We were heavily involved in the United Youth programme. We had pre-design meetings, and a lady from DEL came to us with a blank piece of paper and said, "Tell me about rural issues. What do I need to know?". We had a lengthy meeting with her, and we were also involved with a fringe event. We had a large conference last year for rural dwellers, and there was a fringe

event, so there was a consultation at that as well. We have been consulted on the United Youth summer camp; 30 people came to that feedback meeting a few weeks ago. The really good, positive outworking is that they asked us whether the money should be redesigned to go to hotspots or whether it should be a regional programme. The strong feeling was that rural issues should not be left out of the equation. Just because there is no interface violence and people are not rioting on the street does not mean that rural communities should be forgotten about. Gerry's prime example of that good work still needs to be supported. We also had our own conference, at which 60 people attended. We had OFMDFM officials, and the room was set up so that rural fed into all the strategic priorities. There is a conference paper. We have been very fortunate that there has been a very good, positive relationship with us.

1150. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is encouraging

1151. **Mr C Craig**: Our answer is no and no, in the sense that —

1152. **Ms Jones**: I am the odd one out here.

1153. **Mr C Craig**: We were able to provide some commentary, but what we were looking at was already a fait accompli of design. It was not our experience that we had any influence on design.

1154. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Gerry?

1155. **Mr Burns**: No, but I would have been very happy with T:BUC if it could have delivered something, because we have had nothing delivered for years. We go it alone. Our work is completely different from all that community relations and peace and reconciliation stuff. Our champions and heroes are the people who run the playgroup, Sure Start, the community pharmacy and the tea rooms. There are 17 jobs in our mixed building. Of all the community buildings that I mentioned, ours is the only one that is open every day, right at the interface. From the day that Tony Blair came to help David Trimble, we have gone from there to a place of success, where relationships are flourishing because of everyday contact by ordinary people doing extraordinary jobs in a normal way. We know what normal is, because we have lived there all our lives.

1156. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you very much. I want to bring members in.

1157. **Mr Moutray**: I welcome the opportunity to engage with you today. On the back of what you said, Gerry, do you ever feel that rural communities are left behind when it comes to resources and funding, given that there is not the same manifestation of disorder or community strife?

1158. **Mr Burns**: We have paid a terrible price for being peaceful. I have written letters of complaint to Department of Education officials, never thinking that I would get this opportunity. I am the first person in the history of Armoy to sit at a table at this sort of gathering.This is brilliant because it is real politics. This is the sort of question on which we need to be heard. We have three policemen in Armoy at an Orange parade. There are sometimes 200 in Rasharkin. Resources go in there. We ran a country and western concert; somebody came to play. We had to do 15 pages of a health and safety statement. We paid Roads Service £200 or something for insurance for an evening. I rang the Parades Commission and asked whether all the band parades paid £200. They do not; it is covered by some other Act. Stephen, we pay a terrible price for being peaceful.

1159. **Mr Moutray**: That is what I wanted to tease out. I am all too aware of rural communities across the Province where this is happening; where there has not been the manifestation of disorder on the streets, but yet there is an underlying problem with resources —

1160. **Ms Jones**: Rural communities will say to us, "You're the first group or first people who've ever asked us what we think about the conflict, how it affected us and how it's still affecting us". I am sure that it is the same up round

this way as well. Even in my work over the last six months, a large number of people are coming forward with trauma-related problems who have never tapped into any resources. They are maybe in an area that you think had not been affected at all. They are starting to slowly drip feed into our programmes, and we then have to redirect them to further support. If there is one message that I can get out today, it is equality and fairness for all. We would like to see rural getting its fair share as well. Thirty per cent of the population live in Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. The other 70% live outside of that. Sometimes, that is forgotten about. The whole of Ireland was affected by this. I am an advocate for ensuring that resources are given to rural areas. We find that groups get funded a lot less for that type of work because there are no overt issues.

1161. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: I keep coming back to what I said earlier about focusing on areas rather than groups. There is a great opportunity for that sense of ownership. We are talking about community relations and issues related to that. As the Chair said, different places are different. Obviously, the credibility of people in certain areas is important as well. I am a volunteer as well as being here today in a paid capacity. We must not forget that the volunteers will make the difference for people who live in those areas. They are the people who have that credibility.

1162. Thankfully, as I see it, in times of austerity, there are vast opportunities in my council area of Ballymena and other council areas. The new councils will want to help people who want to help themselves. That is very important. Through that sense of ownership, it is very important to look at community relations. As part of that process, there are other issues that are more important to some people in those communities than community relations. I am not saying that it should be ignored, but there is lower educational attainment, the whole environment of the area and so on. There are other issues that need to be looked at alongside community relations that, equally, can build relationships with people. Those are the most important things for them. That is why you need to focus on areas, get the people working together and a sense of ownership. Relationships build when you start to look at the needs, identify them and tackle all the needs in the area. They are the things that are most important to individuals. When you get trust and respect, you can begin to do other things. It is not a short-term solution, but it is important for government in these times of austerity and so on that people are supported to help themselves and that the communities are showing that they are fitting in with policies in government. There are opportunities coming along that way as well.

1163. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is the point that I was trying to make earlier, Sandy. A witness from Ulster University who had been working up in Belfast said that you bring people together because there are issues that concern them. For example, they want to be better parents in terms of being able to encourage their children who are educationally underachieving. That was the bond that brought them together rather than saying, "We want you to come into a room 'cause you're different".

1164. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: There are other issues. We talked about young people. I have experience of working with young people. One of the reasons why parents are now encouraging their young people to come along is because of the difficulty in the educational system of getting to university and so on. It is good for them to have done a Duke of Edinburgh's Award or to have done work in the community sector environment or something like that. We have also researched elderly people, who still feel undervalued and ignored to some extent. We talk to the young people and they say that they are totally ignored, but when you bring them together, as we have done, and those young people can sit down with grandparents or elderly people and contact people around the

world using FaceTime, they begin to share each other's skills. The older people share their skills and teach the younger ones how to cook and to do so healthily —

1165. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Or how to read.

1166. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: — on a budget and so on. It is a matter of getting the relationships built, not always on the community relations side, although that should not be ignored. To me, that is all good community relations work, particularly when you are working in local areas. It works in local areas because it is the same as the Localism Act 2011 that was passed by the United Kingdom Government and it is why there has been a change in attitudes in Scotland and England and so on. Localism works. It is the same for the leading voluntary organisation in Ireland, which is the GAA. There is local passion for playing for the jersey and the club, the townland and the parish, whatever it might be. That happens in all our communities across barriers and so on. It is about the place where people live, the sense of place and the identity. That identity needs to be progressed to ownership. The opportunities are there through community planning and all sorts of things in government in times of austerity at the moment. There are great opportunities there, but they must be grasped. I go back to saying that local people need to make the changes. There also has to be visibility, because visibility creates credibility. One of the difficulties in communities is that there is sometimes a perception that there is not much credibility. However, there is greater credibility when you are working together as an area, across urban and rural divides that even some Departments have not bridged yet in government. When that is happening, you can begin to go places.

1167. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Thank you.

1168. **Ms McGahan**: Thank you for your presentations. I come from a rural area, and I can very much identify with what you are saying regarding the farming community. I come from a farming family, and we all share equipment, whether it is balers or whatever. We socialise at marts, maybe more so than going there to buy cattle, and that all helps to break down barriers and build relationships, but it is not done in a contrived way; it is done in a very natural way. It is those social settings that help to build confidence. When you build confidence, then comes trust. I see cycling clubs taking off in rural areas; they are very cross-community, but they do not get a penny of funding. That is something that needs to be looked at as well.

1169. **My daughter uses Translink buses. Up our way, we have two Translink buses coming from rural areas**: there is one for the Protestant kids and one for the Catholic kids. I think that is incredible; indirectly, those barriers between our young people are being sustained. Maybe we need to have those conversations with Translink to see how we get our kids to mix even at that level. Even if my daughter missed the bus for whatever reason, she would not get onto the other bus, which is completely daft, but that mentality is there and that is where we are. I have also seen that, when you scratch the surface, the sectarianism is there. I saw that recently in Moygashel, where someone was sitting at a polling booth —

1170. **Ms Jones**: *[Inaudible.]*

1171. **Ms McGahan**: — yes, and we had to get reinforcements in to remove them.

1172. **Ms Jones**: That school is not going to be used in the running of the election now.

1173. **Ms McGahan**: That is unfortunate for the people who live in that area, but we are where we are. In Fivemiletown, which is a predominantly Protestant/unionist area, there is a Catholic primary school at the edge of the town. Following from the stuff coming from Belfast, a Union Jack was put up outside the school, but through the local contacts on the ground, also involving the PSNI, there was a negotiation not to remove the flag but to move it away from the school,

which was to everybody's satisfaction. That was all down to the local contacts.I suppose, in terms of funding, this seems very much Belfast-based to me. I do not see a big focus on rural areas. Someone mentioned that the war did not really impact on rural areas, but that is not the case where I am from. It had an impact. Read the Anne Cadwallader book; it is all there. There are people who would not even make use of the VSS; they do not go to groups; they just sit there. They do not talk about it. It is buried deep, but it is running down from generation to generation. I know a family who had three members and an unborn baby murdered with a bomb that exploded in a house. They do not engage with anybody or anything, but they are there, very isolated.

1174. What recommendations would you like to see coming out of the inquiry?

1175. **Ms Jones**: I would like to see a couple of things, maybe hundreds of things. You talk about the likes of funding and resourcing, and I can give you an example of that as well. I was approached by a couple of rural women, two years ago, who wanted to start a women's project in County Armagh area. They felt that there was nothing really there for women, from a rural perspective. So I started that project or initiative, and it has been running for two years now. The amount of money that the project had assigned to it was only £250. That is £250 for a cross-community, intergenerational project covering Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon. We are still going, two years later, because we use the skills of the local rural women. We try to get free venues and speakers, and we tap into other organisations. That is how we have managed; and we are still going. Thankfully, Craigavon Borough Council's good relations team has come on board now and has seen the merit of two years of hard work with those women across a wide rural district. That is what we are talking about with funding. If I were to place that group in a very urban setting or Belfast, I would probably have thousands of pounds thrown at me.

1176. **Ms McGahan**: Do you think that the policies coming from government discriminate against people living in rural areas?

1177. **Ms Jones**: From our perspective, though the strategy itself was rural proofed, the seven headline actions coming out of it are not seen as having been rural proofed. That is why, with the summer camps, we advocate that you make sure that it is a regional programme, not just urban-centric, and it is in hotspots. Our director is a part of the Housing Executive shared neighbourhood scheme, and she advocates very strongly that, when it comes to shared housing, it should also operate in a rural context. She came back from a meeting to say that Cookstown and Newry city were the west of the Bann, but nothing other than those locations, so she is advocating that as well. We would like to see all the headline actions rural proofed, to make sure that we get a slice of that pie and that the west of the Bann is not forgotten about. It is a large geographical area and not everything is concentrated in the east. Does that answer your question?

1178. **Ms Moffett**: Bronwyn, I was very struck by what you said about the family who do not leave their house or engage in wider society following the bomb. I feel that that is another area that might deserve more resourcing and should be more heavily included in the strategy: the legacy of the past and dealing with the past. Certainly, we have been involved recently with the WAVE Trauma Centre, working on the subject of intimidation. That is an area that we have been doing a lot of work in recently. Our recent conference was called the 'Hidden Menace', because that is exactly what we feel it is. It happens in rural areas. Charmain actually presented at the conference on the rural areas.

1179. Resourcing in this sector is such a big issue. I know that this might be close to your heart from your former positions. If the building of community relations is resourced in a proper manner, savings will be made everywhere else. If we can start to build relationships and address

division, you can start to reduce the policing budget. You can also start to reduce the health budget, because incidence of mental health problems will start to decline. A report came out just recently — last week or the week before — claiming that 40% of people presenting with mental health issues are doing so as a result of Troubles-related experiences. There are so many different areas in which savings could be made, if this area was well-resourced. There are people in this room who have probably heard me make that statement before, but we believe that, if this is properly resourced, it will make a difference across the board.

1180. **Mr Burns**: Bronwyn mentioned something about discrimination against rural areas, but there has been particular discrimination in interface areas like ours. It is a mixed area, and we have been abandoned. There have been no Housing Executive houses built for 35 years. In the catchment area, we used to have 246 houses, but lots of those were sold off, and then we wonder why our Catholic school and our Protestant school are short of numbers. Within the area, there has been an 18·7% increase. It is OK if you have money or access to a mortgage. Social need, in terms of housing, is discriminating against mixed areas like Armoy. The standard of housing repair in the village is abominable. It has been abandoned. There has been no voice in putting forward that case. I do not know what you think about it, but what message is it sending to the people who live there? What message is it sending to a mixed community? In a survey in 2009, 49% of the people thought that there was a need for more housing. The area plan says that there was no case presented for social housing. Land was de-zoned in the area, which is mixed 50:50 and has been mixed for 100 years. The area is peaceful, and it had CRISP investment. Since that, what has been happening?

1181. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Gerry, surely the Housing Executive should have conducted a latent stress test.

1182. **Mr Burns**: Yes, and let me explain this to you. They promote it as demand. Who wants to live in Armoy? It is put in as demand. Then they do an assessment of need. If anyone in Armoy was in need of housing, they would go to the Housing Executive and would be treated very fairly. However, what they do is promote it as demand, then they do an assessment on it, and there is no one in housing stress. The people are being treated terribly unfairly in terms of equality and not having access to a mortgage or money. They are being discriminated against. I have had this argument as recently as last week.

1183. **Mr Sandy Wilson**: I just want to mention one thing. The opportunity of taking forward and developing good relations lies within the new councils as we move into them on 1 April. The fact is that communities, for far too long, have been working on their own, to a certain extent, at building relationships. It must be the communities — when I talk about communities, I am talking about an area, rather than a group — that work with the democratically elected councillors. In most areas, there is quite a breadth and depth of political parties involved. It is very important, in developing good relations from now on, that leadership is shown by community leaders, working alongside political leaders of all perspectives.

1184. **Ms Smyth**: Although I do a lot of single identity work, and you touched on it earlier, it needs to be mapped and measured. It is acceptable, in certain cases, to start with some single identity work, especially with young people who have been very insular and inward-looking. In some of the areas I have worked in, there are multiple funders. There is a lot going on. Part of the reason we were not part of the consultation is that we are not funded through CRC and are maybe not that connected. We have found ways to work effectively, but it is not mapped or measured. You should look at where resources are going and at some kind of outputs — for example, although we do single identity work, we tie all

the work to achievable qualifications. I have worked for the past couple of years with bonfire builders and young guys in bands. We developed an OCN based on public event management, where we could go in and talk about risk assessments, customer service, disability awareness and managing crowd control, and we could bring in environmental health officers to go to the bonfires.We were instrumental in that. Much of the work that we did in that area was around health and well-being outcomes. We talked about everything to do with the well-being of the community, and we made really good strides. They were all run out on OCN level 1 and level 2, so there were concrete figures. We achieved 431 OCN qualifications in three months last year.

1185. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Just for the record, can you spell out for us what OCN is?

1186. **Ms Smyth**: The qualifications are Open College Network-accredited. I brought the workbook along to show the Committee. We have a level-1 qualification developed for low-literacy communities. We tie it to child protection training, basic first aid and basic food hygiene. When we work with young people and talk about building resilience, we go out there and base it all on their own culture. We have cultural education, history of bonfires and history of parading. What I am saying is that that is where you build your resilience but that it is also mappable. If you give funding in and you can see something concrete coming along, there is a big lead-in point to this, but it is still able to be mapped.

1187. That also leads on when you are talking about moving to cross-community work. At some point, if it all seems to be about single identity, there is a conversation to be had there about maybe my project is done, maybe mine is stale and maybe someone else can come in. There has to be an impetus around moving on. My point is looking at this as being about how to measure and how to map and also seeing what other resources are going into communities. There are certain communities that get an awful lot of resource, and I think about what the gentleman at the other end said about Armoy, which seems to be getting very little. There has to be a balance. If you are putting thousands and thousands of pounds in and nothing seems to be happening there, you need to look at it. I say that as someone who delivers single identity work.

1188. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is an absolutely fair point.

1189. **Mr D McIlveen**: Thank you for all of your inputs today. Whilst I congratulate all of you on the work that you do, I want to turn my attention particularly towards Gerry. Armoy, potentially, should be more divided than it actually is if we look at other villages in this area. I am very curious, Gerry, to tease out what you identify as that kind of crossroads moment where a conscious decision was made — it must have been taken at some stage — to say that Armoy will not be another Rasharkin or another Bellaghy or another Dunloy. When was it decided that, as two separate communities, rather than tearing ourselves asunder over sectarian division, we will try to make a go of this, try to accommodate each other and try to build a village and an area that we can be absolutely proud of?

1190. As an elected representative in this area, I dread July because, although 90% of north Antrim is a peaceful, wonderful place in July, 10%, for various reasons, implodes on itself. It is high-pressure and high-stress, and you are just waiting for the worst to happen. At what stage did the people in Armoy, particularly in the nationalist community, say that they have a choice to make here? One choice was to go in the same direction as perhaps some of the neighbouring villages have gone and decide to protest, at certain times of the year, against certain things that they do not necessarily agree with. For the greater good, they decided to try to find an accommodation there. That is what, I think, sets Armoy apart not only from other villages in this area. I think that we could look at every county in the whole

of Northern Ireland and find that, in many ways, Armoy is a trailblazer in that regard. It had the potential for things to explode quite unpleasantly. What happened? How did you do it?

1191. **Mr Burns**: I will explain why I got involved. I am a Catholic and have been involved in the GAA all my life. I still am. Last year, I was chairman of the juvenile club. I have always mentored eight- to 16-year-olds, where we want to get them stuck in. In 1994, I was asked to go along by the Church of Ireland minister. Because he had asked me, I felt some sort of obligation to go along.

1192. In 1995, we had a community meeting chaired by Niall Fitzduff, the then director of the Rural Community Network, in a Protestant school. We did not know how to handle it because there was a Sinn Féin councillor and a DUP councillor who might have come, and, at that time, they were walking in and out of councils. We thought, if they sit at the same table, this will all be a disaster. Both those people came in, one a loyalist and the other a republican, and, before they left, they said to my wife, who is from Donegal and was the secretary, "You should buy the derelict building in Armoy". That was in 1995, and it is an inspiration to me today. It is also an inspiration when I see people sitting around the table here and asking sensible questions.

1193. It worked because we got in what was needed; for example, the playgroup. I talked to the playgroup leader yesterday, and she said, "We came in here to space. In the school, we had to put everything away every day. We were annoying people." That worked. Sure Start came in, and I hope that T:BUC can retain the Sure Start presence in the office in Armoy. We battled for years for a community pharmacy, and it was delivered. We ran summer schemes and all that sort of thing.

1194. How did we get buy-in from the nationalist community? I did not take them with me. I think that, at times, they thought that I had abandoned them. That is why we need government to support this sort of thing. However, they then started to see the benefit of the playgroup and the benefit of Sure Start. Sure Start has helped mothers who were rearing children on their own. The men around Armoy were not interested. There are things that I had to do that I would not like to be recorded in Hansard. They were very tough and very hard, and risks were taken where you could never have said, "These are the outcomes". We did not know whether that community building would be supported or destroyed and by whom, but it has been a resounding success.

1195. The Mayor of Ballymoney, Bill Kennedy, runs a business and is most supportive. People now look forward to the parades on the Twelfth in Armoy, because they bring business and life and are of no threat. Sure Start, the playgroup, the community pharmacy and all those things are of no threat. I am still who I am, and they are who they are. We are more confident. There has been a transformation, particularly in recent times. I have read part of the inquiry report, and Roisin McGlone said that the last stage was empathy. We now get a crossover at funerals. There is a project with Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity. We are doing that sort of thing.

1196. It is cross-community. It is normal. I do not think that we have ever really done community relations. We have done things that are needed. We need houses. We need a footpath. I have written to the Minister about a footpath. The Armoy women attending Sure Start had to go to Ballycastle to walk because the roads and footpaths were not safe and there were so few footpaths. There is so little shared space.

1197. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is very passionate, Gerry. If we crack empathy, we have won.

1198. **Mr Attwood**: Thank you very much for everything that you have said. As I said at one of the previous sessions, in terms of the overall shape and character of our society, we are very clearly and powerfully in a much better place than

we were in the days of conflict. You have given a lot of powerful evidence to that effect, be it in Armoy, Corrymeela or across all your groups, including what you just said about the management of bonfires. It has had a very powerful impact on lives in the communities that you represent, and that can be replicated across the North. I hope that this is wrong, but it is my view that we are now into a very prolonged period where what we are doing is managing our conflict in a non-violent way —

1199. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Alex, I am very sorry to interrupt, but Stephen has to go. If everybody is content, I am now going to formally close the meeting — with only three people we are not quorate — but continue in an informal setting. I adjourn the meeting until next Wednesday at 2.00 pm in Room 30 at Parliament Buildings.

18 March 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Witnesses:

Mr Peter Mullin	*Landscape Institute*
Dr Stephen McCabe	*Northern Ireland Environment Link*

1200. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: I am delighted that we are able to welcome back to the Committee Dr Stephen McCabe, policy and projects officer with Northern Ireland Environment Link, and Mr Pete Mullin, policy representative from the Landscape Institute. Thank you very much for making yourselves available today for our meeting. I invite you to make some short opening remarks before I open the meeting up for questions from the Committee.

1201. **Dr Stephen McCabe (Northern Ireland Environment Link)**: Thank you, Deputy Chairperson, for your welcome and for inviting us back again to provide some evidence to your inquiry. I will go over the ground that I covered last time.

1202. The Northern Ireland Environment Link is the networking and forum body for non-statutory organisations concerned with the environment in Northern Ireland. Members represent a significant constituency in Northern Ireland and manage a large land area, delivering a variety of benefits to society. Members are involved in environmental issues of all types and at all levels from the local community to the global environment. Environment Link brings together a range of knowledge, experience and expertise that can be used to develop policy and practice in environmental issues.

1203. With regard to the implementation of the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy, the simple but key point that we want to get across to you today is that there is a significant existing body of research that demonstrates that the environment is a key factor in building community cohesion. While there is no individual person or single organisation or discipline that has all the answers to complex social issues and problems, part of the solution to overcoming divided communities will be found in addressing environmental improvement. Well-designed and well-maintained shared green space in urban areas has been shown to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, contributing to the establishment of more stable societies. As people feel more comfortable and perhaps have more pride in where they live, their confidence increases and they feel less threatened. Furthermore, better integration of land and transport planning naturally leads to better functioning places, and better functioning places means greater social inclusion.

1204. One term that we want to raise today is that of green infrastructure. Green infrastructure essentially means using green and blue space — vegetation and water — to address social, environmental and economic issues. We suggest that shared natural space, green infrastructure and recognition of the services that flow to society from the environment, which are really true public goods, should be embedded in all public policy. There are great opportunities to do that through the regional development strategy, through the strategic planning policy statement for Northern Ireland, and through the implementation of the very good ideas that exist in the urban stewardship and design guide, ‘Living Places’.

1205. Research shows that shared space is more likely to be used if it is natural in character. Our natural and historic heritage has a potentially massive role to play in delivering T:BUC. Shared spaces are not just urban. We encourage communities to explore our shared spaces outside urban areas. We have beautiful shared spaces and shared built heritage in Northern Ireland, such as the Belfast hills, Mourne Mountains, our great beaches and the rich heritage of the Causeway coastline, to name a few examples. Those are all part of our shared heritage and should be promoted as shared space. The heritage perspective has a large role to play in overcoming division and giving a fresh perspective to the present.

1206. Finally from me, Environment Link has been involved over the past few years in the administration of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) challenge fund. It is just one example, and I gave out books the last time that we were here covering challenge fund projects. It is just one example of how environmental projects can deliver much more than just environmental outcomes. They can deliver community benefits, including increased cohesion, and address cross-community issues, as can be seen in the early stages of the Suffolk interface pocket plots project. Another example of environmental management delivering shared space for communities is Ulster Wildlife's Bog Meadows reserve in west Belfast, which sees in excess of 40,000 visitors a year from across communities. There is potential for much more multiple-benefit work like that in Northern Ireland. I will pass over to Pete now.

1207. **Mr Pete Mullin (Landscape Institute)**: Thank you. Good afternoon. I am a chartered landscape architect and policy consultant for the Landscape Institute in Northern Ireland. First, thanks to the Committee for having us back again. I will try to keep this quite short. Stephen has already covered most of the key points that I would like to cover today, so I will simply concur and support the points that he has made.

1208. In short, there is a growing body of evidence supporting what we all instinctively know, which is that quality environments have a direct and positive impact on people's quality of life. That does not simply mean that provision of well-finished accommodation, for example, will tick all the boxes. As you know, it is much more complex and multilayered. There is no single-fix solution to it.

1209. Over the past four or five years, the Landscape Institute centrally has been very active in developing and advocating some of the core principles of our profession. That has resulted in a number of position papers, and I have issued a couple of those to the Committee. They include climate change, green infrastructure, housing, water and, most recently, public health and well-being. A number of threads run through all those papers, which focus on the fact that good design of the environment delivers multifunctional, tangible and, sometimes, intangible benefit.

1210. You are probably familiar with the Barton and Grant settlement health map. I refer you to our position paper, 'Public Health and Landscape', when you get the opportunity to look at it. There is a simple colourful diagram, which places people at the centre of our settlement, and concentric rings that run out include the built environment and the natural environment. All those things influence people's well-being and health, and studies have shown that that is increasingly demonstrable.

1211. Accommodating change is at the heart of our interest as professions. It is what we do, and it is what we expect. We expect change to take place in our environment, and it is something that we work with. We sometimes call it "material"; it includes working with time as a fourth dimension. That sounds very mysterious, but it is simply about understanding the process of a constantly changing environment. That does not mean that change should just be allowed to have free rein and be left to the open forces. We need to be able to identify what is worth protecting and

managing and what could be better and to work with that. We need to manage expectations and to manage and guide change going forward. That is the foundation of our planning system. Planning is the result of allowing market forces to direct results.

1212. We believe that T:BUC offers great opportunities and has great potential to support the delivery of better place-making and stewardship, which will, in turn, lead to more sustainable communities. As you will be aware, our organisation held a lunchtime conference, last month, here in the Long Gallery, kindly supported by the Committee. It was very successful, and the feedback has been very positive to date. For those who could not make it, we recorded the speakers and will put their speeches up on our website. In short, we had three speakers. Sylvia Gordon, chief executive of Groundwork NI, described how her organisation is working at interface areas with communities to deliver shared space and improve community relations in north Belfast and other parts of Belfast. We had Dr Milena Komarova, an academic from the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and Social Justice at Queen's University, who described some useful and insightful research approaches. One of the key messages that struck me is that all parts of our cities and urban spaces are exposed to conflict and there is contested interest of all kinds in those spaces. In Northern Ireland, we also have the layer of an ethno-nationally divided city to deal with. We have this other elephant in the room, for want of a better description, that we must start to imbed into our policies for and approaches to the delivery of shared spaces. We also had, as a speaker, Neil Porter from Gustafson Porter. They have done a lot of work in Beirut, where they have had to deal with master planning a city that has been exposed to complex conflict and sectarian divide.

1213. The simple message that came out of that conference was captured very well by one journalist, who said that, "Building relationships matter in urban planning". I will finish with the observation that in this context it is simple to focus on the relationship between local communities. That is key, but there is a myriad of other relationships that need to be built as well. We need to improve the structures and resources around funding and procurement, departmental silos and any blockages that can result in dampening aspirations for our public spaces. We have made some ground on that. DOE produced the 'Living Places — An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland' document, which some of you will be familiar with. There are some very good key messages coming out of that document, which now needs to take on a new life and start to be built into policy, but, incidentally, it does not mention T:BUC or the issues that T:BUC is trying to address. It is important that that is somehow built into policy going forward.

1214. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: Thanks very much, gentlemen. You have put forward very persuasive points about the importance of the natural and built environment in shaping the united society that we want to see in Northern Ireland. You have prompted my first question with your reference to the fact that DOE's 'Living Places' document does not explicitly mention the Building a United Community strategy.How well are the extremely important points that you raise reflected in the current Building a United Community strategy?

1215. **Mr Mullin**: 'Living Places' does mention a number of key points. There is a section called "Bringing it Together", which, I think, gets close to what the theme of the inquiry is about. It has a number of key points. One is looking at the challenges. I will flash a picture up from that section of one of the peace walls, which is clearly one of the challenges, but it does not go into any great detail on how we deal with those challenges.

1216. From a practical point of view — I have seen it in my professional practice — there are a great deal of positive

approaches. When dealing with projects through DSD, communities or DOE, professionals and the communities are very keen to deliver and create quality shared space, but there are blockages to that. 'Living Places' is a very nice starting point. It is a good guidance document that sets the high level that we ought to be achieving, but it does not get into the technical side of things. That is where it falls down at this point in time. I think that there needs to be 'Living Places 2' with some kind of technical support to that. How do we deliver? If that is the aspiration, we now need to think about how we deliver that.

1217. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: Building a United Community is similar in a way, because it makes the statement that all public space should be shared space, but I am not too sure how much detail it goes into as to how that is going to be delivered. I certainly do not recall any great reference to the level of detail that you have managed to outline in a short presentation today. Hopefully those will be important points for us to work into the issues that we will document further to the inquiry.

1218. I will ask one other question before I bring in the members. You made some reference to projects such as the Connswater Community Greenway, for example, in my constituency of East Belfast. Are there learning points that could be drawn from that type of project for other projects in other areas of Northern Ireland?

1219. **Dr McCabe**: It is very difficult to take something as good as the Connswater Community Greenway and just drop it in other places, but there are definitely lessons that we can learn there on the multiple benefits of having a space like that, not only for shared communities but in terms of transport, active travel and flood alleviation. It ticks so many boxes across different policy areas. Also, the way that it is funded, with input from lots of different Departments and bodies, is a good example for us going forward.

1220. **Mr Mullin**: It is a good example. Probably the criticism, if there is a criticism, is that it responds to a natural system. It responds to the Connswater, which is where it comes from. It comes from the Castlereagh hills down to the foreshore. That is happenstance. That is where it is, so it does not pass through an interface area, for example. It is very much an east Belfast-based project. I think that there is some leverage towards the Short Strand, but not really anything physically connected.

1221. It would be interesting, as a learning exercise, to try to apply the same principles of a green corridor, or what we call a piece of green infrastructure, through a series of more difficult and challenging interface areas. Alexandra Park is one that was discussed during our conference last month. It is also attached to a small watercourse, which is called the Mile Water and runs from the Belfast hills right down through several difficult interfaces to the foreshore. There is much disconnect physically and psychologically, so it would be interesting if some kind of project could be applied on that basis to see what the real results might be.

1222. **Mr D McIlveen**: Thanks very much. I suppose that my question is following on the same theme. The Department and the First Minister and deputy First Minister in particular have been very enthusiastic about the concept of urban villages. A few urban villages have already been announced and tied in with the strategy, yet I noticed that there was no specific mention of that concept in the submissions that we have received from you. I am curious to know whether that was just an oversight or whether you have a particular opinion on urban villages. It would be interesting for us to hear what that might be.

1223. **Mr Mullin**: To be honest, at the time of writing our submission, I was not tuned in to the urban village initiative. Having said that, I am still not entirely tuned in to the urban village initiative. I know that there is a high-level brief attached to that, but I am not personally familiar with the detail of what encapsulates an

urban village. Is it bound by lines? Is it focused on a single point that radiates out? What defines an urban village? I have been making enquires to DSD about urban villages, actually in just the last couple of days. I would be very keen to understand where the gaps may be in what the initiative is trying to achieve. In principle, yes, urban villages have the potential to do what we want them to do, which is to reposition areas, but we would then need to see that that is not inward looking. It needs to be an outward-looking approach.

1224. **Mr D McIlveen**: Thank you very much for that. I am sure that the Department will not be found wanting in trying to clarify that for you.

1225. Last week, we had a regional meeting in my constituency, North Antrim. We had a fairly long, drawn-out conversation around that kind of point about whether putting people together crosses the line of social engineering. I wonder whether, from your point of view, looking at it from the environmental side, you see a sort of no-go line, which, if it were crossed over, would actually almost be counterproductive. Last week, I used the example of Unity Flats in Belfast, which is probably one of the biggest contradictions in terms that you will ever find. It was obviously built with the best of intentions, but it did not achieve what it was supposed to achieve. Where there are examples of bad practice in this regard, where, from your point of view, is the line not to cross?

1226. **Mr Mullin**: A lot of good study has been done that shows that involving grass-roots communities and, again as you will be aware, children's groups and education is always a very positive way to make a change. I think that this comes back to the idea of what I mentioned earlier about time. There is no quick-fix solution to any of this. It will have to be something that we will grind out over a long period. Unless you put the seed in place and bring, for example, willing communities together, there will always continue to be blockages. I think that it would probably be to all our benefit if we were to identify ways in which to bring those communities together. We can lead the horse to water, but we cannot make it drink. We have to identify opportunities where we can get cross-community involvement, whether that be through a lot of good work that is done by Belfast Healthy Cities to create allotments and places for children to get involved in the environment, and working in that nature.

1227. **Dr McCabe**: I agree with Pete that the physical environment and creating good spaces and places is sort of where we are coming from. I appreciate that there are other layers of complexity on top of that — absolutely. I would also endorse what Pete said about environmental education. That is a key area of potential for crossing communities and getting schoolkids doing things together in the environment.

1228. **Mr Mullin**: There is an initiative in the rest of the UK called Learning through Landscapes. It is in England, Scotland and Wales. We do not have it here. It is very positive. It starts in schools. They do a lot of outdoor work with kids and learning from their environment. We do have some good work going on, but maybe we need to be more structured and organised about that.

1229. **Dr McCabe**: I will just add one more thing to that. We have now reached 100% participation in the eco-schools programme in Northern Ireland. There is a great existing network there that we can tap into on these issues.

1230. **Mr D McIlveen**: Finally, just to you, Stephen — I think that this will be a fairly short answer — you mentioned the issues of shared open space. I am particularly blessed to represent North Antrim, where we obviously have a lot of open space, which is certainly very much viewed upon as being open to everybody. There are no signs or emblems; nothing. You go there and it is just purely open. The natural beauty is there. However, in recent months, some of the open space around Belfast — at one site in particular, which I would say is probably known to you — has been used for the promotion of messages, which, at times,

have been quite sectarian in nature. Presumably, you would discourage that type of abuse of the landscape.

1231. **Dr McCabe**: One of the great things about the environment is that it is for everyone equally. That is my position on it.

1232. **Mr Mullin**: I think that that applies to all space, whether it be a large open space or even a small urban space. There needs to be a movement towards, if you like, less branding of space and a repositioning of those areas.

1233. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: I have a couple of other members to bring in. Where do murals fit in to the consideration of these issues?

1234. **Mr Mullin**: That is clearly at the heart of a lot of the problems. A thorny debate on that is currently ongoing. Generally, as designers, when we are brought in — I was talking to Stephen about this outside — we get very good at negotiating with people and talking about repositioning a new space. Where an opportunity arises for a piece of streetscape or urban design, you very much design with humans in mind, as opposed to any particular political attitude. You design it to create a nice space and a nice environment. I would be very surprised if there were any professional designers who did not take that approach to it. The difficulty is what happens afterwards. I have personal experience of working on a number of schemes where we did the handover and, the next thing, flags went up when the communities moved in. That is unhelpful because it very much sets out the use for that. If you like, the division becomes very prevalent there. There has to be a sea change in how we steward things going forward. We were in the habit of investing money in the creation of a space and then maybe putting aside a small budget for maintenance of it, but ownership finishes at that point. I think that that is where the idea of stewardship, which is in the title of the document, 'Living Places — An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland', comes in; that it has to be ongoing and repeated. You cannot just walk away from it and leave it.

1235. **Mrs Hale**: Thank you for your presentation. You mentioned that the Landscape Institute is marking its fiftieth year as a profession, so congratulations. In that time, there has been a demise in your public sector membership. Why do you think that is? Have you made any representations to the shadow councils to inform them of your work? I speak specifically about Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council. I would like to put on record at this time the impressive renovation of Castle Gardens in Lisburn. As Stephen said earlier, it does indeed raise the historical and heritage environment of the city. I think that everybody has bought into that again. With regard to stewardship, there have not been any flags: the whole city has taken ownership of the gardens. The new councils, such as Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, are coming in next month. Have you made representations to them about the work that you do?

1236. **Mr Mullin**: Professionally, as the Landscape Institute, we have very much liked to hide under a bushel. We have not been very good at promoting the work that we do. As you say, it is 50 years this year. That actually coincides with the fiftieth-year celebration of Craigavon as a new town, when the first professionals came to Northern Ireland to help to deliver that project and the institute was set up.It was an all-island institute, and we were the only landscape architects in the whole of Ireland. We tend not to promote our work in the way that we maybe ought to, and, in the last couple of years, we have been trying to change that. Since I was taken on for the secretariat of the institute in the last year, part of the work that I have been doing involves being its policy consultant. That is now a small paying role that is about putting a wee bit more concerted effort into the promotion and advocacy of what we do. We have a plan to approach the 11 new councils to try to build up our presence within them. It is about

capacity building. You are quite right. I did a statistic recently, and I found that, in Scotland, something like 50% of the local authorities have a landscape architect and 90% have access to one to help to inform brief and with development plans and policy.

1237. In Northern Ireland, it is 7% currently. That will probably change when we turn to 11 councils, as opposed to 26, but, at the moment, Belfast is the only local authority that has a landscape architect working in it. Actually, I think that Derry has one as well, but the rest of the country has not felt the need for landscape professionals. I think that the simple reason is that there is a perception that only Belfast and Derry have parks, therefore, it is only they that need landscape professionals. The reality of modern life and the modern environment is that there is pressure from wind turbines, infrastructure and economic regeneration. All councils will feel the effect of that. So, you need to have people who are professionally equipped to help you inform policy going forward. We are doing work on it, but we could do better.

1238. **Mrs Hale**: Thank you. I hope to get some input on the transformation of the Lagan canal, which runs through Lisburn. I look forward to seeing your fingerprints over that work.

1239. **Dr McCabe**: Absolutely. On behalf of the wider sector, we have been engaging, or will be engaging, with councillors on their new planning powers. We are producing a planning handbook, if you like, with Sustainable Northern Ireland, which tries to raise awareness of environmental and heritage assets in each council area. We will be distributing that through the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

1240. **Mr Maskey**: If I get these questions right, I am going to swap seats with you. These are very difficult issues, and, for the Committee's inquiry, we are trying to work out who can help and what additional matters people can bring to the table. That is your last question. Do you want to discuss with us how your profession and the Landscape Institute can help to bring communities together? You have addressed a number of the issues, and Brenda mentioned the capacity of local government and the deficit, as you see it, of your profession being involved in the planning stages. I understand structurally how we can increase the number of your members in the various institutions, if it is thought necessary. I understand clearly the need to have a landscape strategy that would underpin strategic planning and design issues, and I also understand the need to get something into the curriculum and into education. I can picture all that and say, "Well, there is a gap. Let us see whether we can fill it". However, when you then talk about interfaces, the Bog Meadows, Custom House Square or a range of the other initiatives that have been identified, all of which are very good and very successful in their own way, how do we add value to that?

1241. In most interface areas that you will know — you addressed some of them — it would not matter whether you were putting palm trees in, because people need the interface under the current circumstances that they feel they have to live within. The last thing that a lot of those communities want is to take that wall down. That is a sad reflection of the life that we live. If you went into a lot of people's houses and looked out at a wall, you would find that, unfortunately, they would rather have that, because they feel safer in their home. That is a shocking indictment on all of us. In the context of your presentation, we are trying to work out how we bring what you have to offer, which is your higher vision on the use of space. How do you introduce that into a conversation with people who are fearful of where they live and do not want to have anything done to the wall? Do you know what I mean? You cannot ignore the other. You have already identified a lot of initiatives through which parks have been built and initiatives have been taken. That is all very good, but how do we reach the place where we really need to make a difference to people's quality of life by bringing them together? As I said, it

would not matter what you do with some of those walls, people want them there. We are trying to set ourselves a target for removing them, but when you talk to the people who live there, you find that they would rather have them than what they feel would be the insecurity of having them taken away.

1242. What other conversations might you have those communities? You addressed the point that you have been involved in initiatives and that you went and negotiated with the community and got the murals down, but then, when you did that bit of work, you found that they went back up again. That is really only managing a situation. I am not saying that you are wrong to do that, because, ultimately, we all do it at times. I am just trying to work out what else your profession can bring other than good, high-quality landscape design and a high-level vision, which are all very important. How do we marry that with the need to get people to feel more comfortable with where they live, if you know what I mean? It is a tough question; I know that. I do not expect you to have you the answer, but I would expect you to take it away and think about it.

1243. **Mr Mullin**: There clearly is no easy solution to it. We have members who are involved at a number of levels, and the conference that we had last month was quite interesting. It had, if you like, three tiers. I was involved in setting the thing up and deliberately chose three speakers. There was an academic to give an overview of cities in conflict, and we also had a master planner, who dealt with looking for connectivity and solutions through planning and urban design on a bigger scale. Sylvia from Groundwork was also there to deal with the on-the-ground aspects. It is one of those situations where it is not one issue or another; all those things have to come together. Unfortunately, this issue will be a case of small gains. I do not think that we are going to be able to make a wall disappear overnight; it is going to take time to look for ways to create breaks and apertures — almost a road through the peace wall, as opposed to removing it. We may have to look at ways that we can start to take it down a bit, narrow it a bit or shorten it so that we can gradually get people confident enough to think that it is OK. There will be a process, I think. It is not going to be a quick win; it will be a slow process. That is just my own thought.

1244. When the walls eventually come down, we will have to think about what is beyond them and what it is that we are revealing. There are examples in the city of areas that have had antisocial sectarian behaviour, if you want to call it that, or antisocial behaviour — both are very similar when you see them expressed — where communities have now been rebuilt. I am thinking, for example, of the back of Clonard — I mentioned this before — where there is new social housing that is very much on the back of the interface wall. With the benefit of Google Earth nowadays, you can jump from one side of the street to the other, and when you look at it, you realise that it is just more housing. It is about trying to educate people and children about what is over the wall. They have the current perception that there is something big and scary beyond that large wall that they should not have contact with. The reality is that it is just another street.

1245. So, I think that there is a whole slow process of trying to bring people backwards and forwards from that point.

1246. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: One of the young people at a recent event of ours asked whether walls could be see-through, which I never heard anybody ask before. I am not sure that it is as immediately dismissible as you might think. As the professional landscape architecture experts, you could have a think about that.

1247. **Mr Mullin**: Increase the sales of Perspex.

1248. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: There could be a gradual revelation that the other side has similarities, rather than differences.

1249. **Mr Mullin**: I will mention one small project that we are working on at the moment. I have secured a piece of the Berlin Wall for Northern Ireland, after contacting the senate in Berlin about it. During the process of pulling this response together and the conference, Berlin was celebrating 25 years since the wall came down. There was a map — I think it was in 'The Guardian' — showing pieces of the wall everywhere from Christchurch in New Zealand through to Canada. There was none in Ireland, so I thought, "Hold on a minute; there is an opportunity here to take something". Obviously, the reasoning behind the walls is politically very different, but the idea of division is the same. What can we possibly do with that? There might be a number of little spin-out projects that we can use that piece of wall to identify and that can shine a light on the problem. All those little things can help.

1250. **Mr Attwood**: First, I agree with your point that there has to be opportunities for better understanding that unity when we appreciate the scale of our built, natural, archaeological and Christian heritage, which is in the common ownership of all our people. There must be some learning about and narrative on all that to open our minds beyond the more orthodox approach. I think that you indicated that earlier. Part of T:BUC should be not just about managing visible expressions of division but must have a narrative about our shared heritage and the wonder of it, celebrating it and drawing conclusions from it. T: BUC, which we think is quite a moderate start anyway, lacks that sense of grounding. Its idea of a united community already unites us, but we do not seem to acknowledge it in the way that we should.

1251. Alex Maskey is right to ask how your institute and experience can inform building a united community at the hard end. It is only when you are on the ground working with communities that people begin to see other ways that a wall might look. The point is still valid, because at the far end of all that, unless there is confidence on both sides, it does not go anywhere. That is rightly so, because when people have their worst fears, you cannot just say that it will be all right on the night. That is just not credible. My first question, therefore, is whether you are you involved in any of that work on the walls with OFMDFM to look at the options and at how they can be made to look or feel different? They probably have to feel different before they look different, or before they are different and can all be taken down.

1252. **Mr Mullin**: I am not involved in those projects. I know that some of our members are involved through DSD streetscape improvements in various parts of north and east Belfast. We have private practitioners involved in lots of these procured initiatives and master plan initiatives. As Brenda mentioned, we could benefit from more members being involved in brief setting within the city council. They can then deliver some of those strategies through the new development plans and local policies that will come forward. Yes, we have people involved once it has been recognised that a project is needed. It would be more helpful, however, if we had people involved in helping to set up those projects and to identify the potential.

1253. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: Thank you very much indeed, gentlemen. I have found this very useful, and we will factor all this into our issues paper. I might also propose to the Committee that we write to the Department of the Environment to ask how the urban design guide, 'Living Places', will link with Together: Building a United Community and for some more information on how organisations would engage with the design process for urban villages.Are there any other last issues of that nature that you would like to raise?

1254. **Dr McCabe**: I will chime in a little on the heritage aspect. I know that NIEA will very shortly release its historic environment strategy. I think that there is a lot of scope there for T:BUC and that those strategies should speak to one another.

1255. **Mr Maskey**: Is there any other information? You referred to other case studies and so on that you might have, but I do not see them in this pack. Can you maybe make it available to us at some point?

1256. **Mr Mullin**: There was a series of papers, and we can recirculate them to anybody who did not receive them the last time. We need to find a mechanism to almost mark the success of T:BUC going forward. There are a number of sustainability markers out there. I am trying to say this without creating another tier of bureaucracy, because the last thing that anybody needs is another box to tick. There are a number of mechanisms such as the Building Research establishment environment Assessment Method (BReeAM), which is to do with creating sustainable design. BReeAM is applied to a lot of public-sector projects, including schools, hospitals and social housing. CeeQUAL is another one. It is more connected to civil work, streetscape work and town centre work. I wonder whether there is a mechanism whereby, as part of the tender procurement process, we have to deliver the results for economic benefit. If you are designing a town centre improvement scheme, you have to involve economists to determine what the net benefit is for every pound spent; for example, a £3 return for the investment of each pound. I wonder whether there is something in that mechanism that marks our success in bringing communities together. They could be things that we have done in a master plan process that are maybe more outward looking, looking at connections and at opportunities to avoid division physically. A good designer will do that as part of their process; they just need to set it out. That will give us a tangible way to mark the success of that programme.

1257. **The Deputy Chairperson (Mr Lyttle)**: Thanks very much indeed, gentlemen. We have a lot to go on there. Thank you for your contribution today. We hope to produce a report of the inquiry towards the end of this session, so we will be able to re-engage with you then.

13 May 2015

Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen

Witnesses:

Miss Donna Blaney	*Office of the First*
Mrs Linsey Farrell	*Minister and deputy*
Mr Michael McGinley	*First Minister*
Mr Peter Robinson	

1258. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I welcome Peter Robinson, Michael McGinley, Donna Blaney and Linsey Farrell.

1259. **Mrs Linsey Farrell (Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister)**: Thank you, Chair. I will make a few brief opening remarks, if that is OK.

1260. Chair, thank you for your introduction and for the invitation to appear here today to update the Committee on the progress of the implementation of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) and respond to the common themes that emerged from the inquiry into the strategy's implementation.

1261. Together: Building a United Community was published on 23 May 2013, following the announcement of seven strategic headline actions by the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 9 May. We had the opportunity to brief the Committee in February and October 2014 on the implementation of the strategy, and we welcome this further opportunity to comment on the responses received to the inquiry.

1262. As you are aware, the range of commitments and actions contained in the T:BUC strategy extends well beyond the seven headline actions. In total, there are in the region of 42 actions and commitments, which, compositely, will contribute to achieving our vision of a shared, united and reconciled community. I acknowledge the view raised in inquiry responses that the headline actions, in and of themselves, will not address all the issues that divide our community. However, it is a long-term strategy, and it is one that will evolve over time.

1263. I would like to commence by focusing on the responses received to the inquiry. While it is impossible to cover every issue raised, I will focus on a number of the key issues that have been highlighted throughout. We welcome the wide range of interest from organisations that have responded to the inquiry. I believe that this is testimony to the real passion across our community for building a united, shared and reconciled society. From an analysis of the responses received, there are a number of common themes that have been identified, and I will cover each in turn.

1264. In respect of the level of engagement or involvement with the sector, there was a lengthy public consultation on the Executive's draft cohesion, sharing and integration (CSI) strategy and further stakeholder engagement as part of the detailed design of the many actions being delivered. The establishment of the thematic subgroups has also provided vital opportunities for engagement with the sector, and we look forward to developing that engagement as the subgroups take their work forward.

1265. In respect of communications, we are working to develop a stakeholder newsletter to show the continuing progress in the implementation of the strategy and other good relations activities. We are also working closely with the Community Relations Council (CRC) to enhance our opportunities to engage with stakeholders in a more structured way. Over the coming months, we hope to hold a number of events

that will also provide a platform to communicate the work that has been taken forward under the strategy and highlight other successes that have been achieved as a result of good work across our community.

1266. A number of the comments received focused on funding issues, and we acknowledge that it has not always been possible to provide groups with early notification of funding. For 2015-16, steps have been taken to ensure that funding is released earlier in the new financial year. This has been made possible by the Executive's commitment to allocate £10 million of funding towards the delivery of the strategy. This will facilitate the allocation of funding earlier in the year and funding programmes commencing promptly. Letters of offer were issued to six of the councils in April, and we plan to be in a position to agree the remaining five before the end of May. Officials are working with those five councils to ensure that their planned programmes of work meet the Department's requirements.

1267. Assessment of applications to the north Belfast programme was also completed in April, and letters of offer were issued to the 12 contract holders in the week commencing 4 May, dependent on their ability to revise their applications as appropriate to ensure they are sufficiently outcome-focused and that all programmes align with the aims of the T:BUC strategy.

1268. In total, we received 175 applications to the central good relations fund, which closed on 20 April. The assessment panel met initially on Monday 11 May, and officials are in the process of contacting groups that have been successful. The summer camp multi-agency panel will meet to review the applications to deliver 100 summer schools and camps during 2015 on 20 May, and we are on target to announce the successful projects in the week commencing 1 June.

1269. Several issues have also been raised through the inquiry regarding the sharing of best practice. We are fully aware of the importance of sharing best practice, and it is something that we are continually seeking to do. The good relations officer conference is a good example of sharing that provides a space for sharing experiences of successful project delivery. We are also actively discussing with our officers other ways of sharing best practice through a new shared learning initiative within the structures of the new councils.

1270. The north Belfast strategic good relations programme bi-monthly forum has progressed to being a monthly forum due to demand from the groups and progression of the forum remit in response to learning and feedback from 2014-15 programme. That forum is a key driver in facilitating the use of techniques, such as outcomes-based accountability and mapping, which can be built on in-year and incrementally through each iteration of the strategic good relations programme in north Belfast. That learning is vital to informing the work of other areas, as ideas from those areas are used to add value to the work of the north Belfast programme.

1271. Through other fora led by the Department, such as the good relations programme board, learning and best practice is shared across all Departments. These fora facilitate the sharing of learning and knowledge to help inform plans, projects and programmes within other Departments. The Department also engages closely with the Community Relations Council and other stakeholders to share information. That engagement enables the Department to give feedback directly to practitioners and other stakeholders and facilitates open and frank discussion on a range of issues.

1272. With enhanced community planning powers, the new councils have the potential to have greater involvement in many areas, such as community relations. The Department has been working with councils to facilitate that and share alignment between the good relations action plans and the key priorities within Together: Building a

United Community. Further engagement with councils is planned.

1273. A further focus of the responses to the inquiry was on outcomes, and I can report that the performance monitoring framework for all programmes and projects related to T:BUC will utilise an outcomes-based approach. This approach has involved the developmental of departmental guidance on outcomes-based methodology to monitor and evaluate actions and activities flowing from projects.

1274. Respondees have expressed concerns about an absence of definitions in the strategy. However, it is our view that actions are outlined in the strategy to address these issues. For example, whilst there is a definition of sectarianism in the strategy, a commitment is given to reach an appropriate consensus on a definition for inclusion in the legislation for the equality and good relations commission. Good relations are currently defined by reference to the groups named in section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. There is no additional definition in the strategy; however, a commitment is given to reviewing and revising the good relations indicators that will measure the desired impacts of activities for each of the four priority areas in the strategy.

1275. The revised indicators have now been agreed by Ministers following extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. In the context of the implementation of the strategy, the revised indicators and associated outcomes will be used to monitor progress at a population level and will provide the strategic performance measurement framework to underpin the measurement of impacts across the strategy's headline actions, associated programmes and funding streams, including the district council good relations actions.

1276. Equality screening has also been raised as an issue in the inquiry. Through the good relations programme board, assurances have been sought from all Departments that they are fulfilling their statutory obligations as they deliver their headline actions on a regular basis. Officials in OFMDFM have carried out an equality impact screening of the T:BUC summer camps pilot programme for 2015-16. At this stage, no negative impacts have been identified, and as such the policy will be screened out. However, given that this is a pilot programme, it was decided that this decision will be kept under review in the event that any additional impact should be identified as the programme rolls out.

1277. I would now like to provide a brief update on the headline actions contained in the strategy, if time allows.

1278. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You have certainly gone over five minutes. My first question is this: why was the paper submitted at 9.08 am today?

1279. **Mrs Farrell**: The papers were under consideration by the Department.

1280. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: When were they written?

1281. **Mrs Farrell**: The date on which they were written or submitted to the private office is immaterial to the date on which they issue. Both are parts of the wider process in the Department to allow engagement and ongoing discussion between Ministers and officials.

1282. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I read the following line about summer camps:

"the closing date for applications to be submitted to the Education Authority is 8 May 2015."

1283. That use of tense tells me that it was written well before 8 May. Linsey, you know that papers are supplied to the implementation group of the Stormont House Agreement every Monday, days in advance, regularly and promptly and without any issues. Yet this Committee is entirely disrespected on a weekly basis by the same people.

1284. **Mrs Farrell**: I cannot comment on that, other than to say that they were under consideration by the Department.

1285. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Together: Building a United Community is a strategy that celebrates its second birthday this month. How much have you spent?

1286. **Mrs Farrell**: On good relations in general or on T:BUC headline actions?

1287. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How much have you spent on T:BUC over the last 24 months?

1288. **Mrs Farrell**: Over the 24 months, particularly during 2014-15, we delivered in the region of £9 million to support good relations activity across a number of programmes. I believe that those are cited in the briefing document the Committee received about the range of funding programmes.

1289. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How much of that would not have been spent were it not for T:BUC?

1290. **Mrs Farrell**: The T:BUC allocation in this year's budget was only agreed in the context of the Stormont House Agreement and the Budget settlement, and of the £10 million allocation, just over £8 million has been allocated across the headline actions to a number of Departments.

1291. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Are you saying that the £9 million that you have just said has been spent would have been spent anyway, with or without T:BUC?

1292. **Mrs Farrell**: Not necessarily. I believe that there was a real commitment given in Together: Building a United Community by the Executive to ensure that resources were available, particularly at a time when they were depleting in other areas. Together: Building a United Community has continued to be a priority and one that has attracted funding. It has not suffered in the same way as other areas. There is real priority given to it, and those funding schemes are testimony to that.

1293. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: How much of the £9 million would have been spent anyway, and how much is attributable directly to T:BUC being in existence?

1294. **Mrs Farrell**: Donna may know the detail of spend before that, but it certainly would not have been to that level.

1295. **Miss Donna Blaney (Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister)**: No, it would not. I do not have the exact figures for the difference between what would have been spent and what was spent, but, through in-year bids for T:BUC, we have achieved additional funding for the district councils good relations programme, the central good relations programme, the north Belfast strategic good relations programme and the summer interventions programme.

1296. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: In round terms, what would that add up to?

1297. **Miss Blaney**: It is going towards at least £3 million. That is just off the top of my head.

1298. **Mrs Farrell**: We can certainly check the exact figures and write back to the Committee, if that would be useful.

1299. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Two years: £3 million.

1300. **Mrs Farrell**: And now £10 million; in fact, £13 million.

1301. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: This is a programme that was launched with the then junior Minister saying that it was a half-a-billion-pound initiative. Three million pounds has been spent in two years. Wow.

1302. **Mrs Farrell**: I think that the figure of half a billion pounds took in the expenditure across a range of funding programmes, including what is put in by the Executive. Peace III was a significant player in promoting good relations and reconciliation. A proportion of that is provided by the Northern Ireland Administration, and OFMDFM is the accountable Department for that. If you take in the expenditure under Peace III and that from other external funders, such as the International Fund for Ireland and The Atlantic Philanthropies, with which we jointly funded the

contested spaces programme, it represents a significant expenditure on good relations over the period. Since the beginning of this financial year, we now have £10 million that is specifically ring-fenced to support the delivery and implementation of T:BUC across all Departments.

1303. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: In what way is Northern Ireland better off because of T:BUC?

1304. **Mrs Farrell**: It is better off because we now have a strategic framework for good relations. Previously, we were working with a direct rule document, 'A Shared Future'; the Executive now have their own good relationships strategy and framework for action.

1305. Although issues have been raised around implementation, some of which are included in the inquiry, the community has embraced the fact that there is now a framework for action with which to align their work. What we heard previously was that there was a bit of a vacuum and that they had nothing to pin their work to. T:BUC sets out a clear vision of the type of society that we all want to live in. It sets out four key strategic priorities that we want to focus on over the lifetime of the strategy, a number of quite challenging headline actions and somewhere in the region of 42 other actions and commitments that are to be taken forward by Departments. There is no doubt that it is a longer term strategy.

1306. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: You say that there are challenging headline actions, and you have included, for example, summer camps. Those have been happening for decades. What is challenging about running a summer camp?

1307. **Mrs Farrell**: Summer interventions have been happening for decades. Summer schools and camps represent a new approach to how we engage with young people.

1308. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: That is not what we heard when we took evidence.

1309. **Mrs Farrell**: From our view in the Department — and Donna will want to come in on the detail — the detailed design has been with stakeholders, and their involvement in putting together the design has shown the importance of it not just being about working with children and young people for three to four days in the summer to divert them from periods of tension. It is about engagement before and after and Donna can detail that.

1310. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: I am very happy for Donna to come in, but perhaps you would include something else, Donna. When we had our stakeholder event, I was sitting beside a woman who works in youth services, and her speciality is summer camps. When T:BUC was announced in May 2013 she was very excited. She sat by her phone thinking that you guys would be phoning her in a day or two because she had all the expertise in the world and you would want to tap into it. She waited 18 months for that phone call. I would like you to take that on board as you are responding to what Linsey said.

1311. **Miss Blaney**: Over that interim period, we recognised that summer camps have been going on for a number of reasons and to deliver a number of outcomes. In the context of Together: Building a United Community, summer camps are different.

1312. At the beginning, the aspiration was to create the opportunity for young people who attended the camps to build and maintain sustainable relationships that they maybe would not have had the opportunity to have in their day-to-day lives. We carried out an extensive engagement process with stakeholders and, hopefully, the person you referred to has had the opportunity to speak to us. Over 200 stakeholders have engaged in the co-design process, including people who have direct experience of delivering summer camps, youth workers and young people. We had almost 300 attendees at workshops in preparation for the applications to the summer camps.

1313. As a result of that process, we have been able to design a programme that will deliver specific and very defined outcomes for those camps. They are things along the lines that, as a result of the camps, attendees will have positive attitudinal change towards people from a different background, sustained contact and friendships will be developed between young people from different backgrounds, young people will be more positive about shared activities, there will be better recognition about the role that young people play in peace building and they will have a better understanding of and respect for cultural differences. That is the focus of the scheme.

1314. We have other summer camps that are called planned interventions, but they are much more generic and are about facilitating people at times of specific community tension and maybe taking them out of their areas. That is quite a different programme. Our stakeholders and particularly the young people have welcomed that. They want something different. They just do not want to go away on a certain night and spend some time together and then go back to their communities and never see those people again.

1315. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: So, those are summer camps, the likes of which Northern Ireland has never seen before.

1316. **Miss Blaney**: Hopefully. At the minute, we have 154 applications to deliver them and those will be assessed in the next couple of weeks.

1317. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Will they all be new camps, or will some have happened before but simply be reshaped to meet your objectives?

1318. **Miss Blaney**: We will assess them to make sure that we have people delivering them who have experience of working with young people or delivering camps. If people do not have experience in delivering camps, we want to make sure that they are working with those who have the experience to deliver camps that will have those outcomes.

1319. One of the unique aspects is pre- and post-engagement. It is not that they take a group of young people away for three or five days. They will also build relationships during pre- and post-engagement processes. Young people will use social media in whatever way they want to keep in contact, and we plan to have a shared learning forum in the late autumn or early winter, and some sort of celebration event, at which we can bring back the young people who participated to tell us what worked well and what did not. Remember: this is a pilot that will inform how we go forward in the future.

1320. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: There was a pilot last year as well.

1321. **Miss Blaney**: We delivered some pilots, but those were done before and during the engagement process and they have also informed this process. We wanted to make sure that the process was shaped to be different and actually delivered for the young people who participate.

1322. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. I am a young person, you prep me, I go to a camp in the first week of August and I know what to expect. I come through the camp. What happens after that?

1323. **Miss Blaney**: After the camp, there will be post-engagement.

1324. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: When will that be? If I went to the camp on the first week of August when would you —

1325. **Miss Blaney**: It will be up to the project deliverers. The people who are making the applications to deliver the camps have to include pre- and post-engagement phases.

1326. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Is it just one engagement? Is it one meeting?

1327. **Miss Blaney**: It could be a one-day event. Within the programme design, there is a set number of hours for face-to-face contact between the programme deliverers and the young people. It is not that they just take them to a

museum and put them back on the bus at the end of the day. In addition —

1328. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Specifically what happens? I have been to the camp, how long do I wait before the organisers get back in touch and how often do they get in touch? How many post-camp events will there be?

1329. **Miss Blaney**: At the moment, for this year, there will be one post-camp event that is being organised by the camp deliverer.

1330. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Just one.

1331. **Miss Blaney**: That will be followed up by another event in the late autumn or early winter that we will organise. That will be a mixture of a celebration event and a shared learning forum. There may actually be two events?

1332. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: And that is it.

1333. **Miss Blaney**: It is, for the pilot for 2015. Importantly, we will take the learning from this to inform what we need to do differently if the participants and deliverers tell us that it is not as effective. It is also about how we build in the online or continuous monitoring to see whether it is effective. You cannot really tell, the following week, whether people have sustainable relationships. We will need to build in that monitoring.

1334. **Mrs Farrell**: Those are exactly the things that we will want to test at the pilot stage. When we look at assessing the applications, we will look for innovative ideas and different delivery models to allow us to test how the post-camp event will work in practice. Furthermore, we are looking at how we can signpost and cross-refer to the various headline actions of T:BUC. It may be useful to signpost a young person involved in a summer camp to United Youth or to the cross-community sports programme. We are looking at that in the context of the outcomes framework as well.

1335. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: My reading of the evidence that we have taken so far is that, if engagement is not continual — continual rather than continuous — it is potentially a waste.

1336. **Mr Lyttle**: Thanks for your update. I start by wishing you well as you get further into the detail of the actual work on delivering the strategy. I have worked closely with some of you before, and I know that you are genuinely committed to doing the work. I do not envy your challenge of building a united community in a political context where parties seem content to represent what they believe to be their community, but you are committed nonetheless. Have community relations improved in the two years since the publication of T:BUC?

1337. **Mrs Farrell**: Thanks for your comments, Chris. The good relations indicators showed where improvements had been made, albeit other indicators showed some ways in which relationships were not improving. That is why a key commitment was given to look at the indicators and review them in the light of Together: Building a United Community. I often heard the indicators referred to as "bad relations indicators", as opposed to something more positive, so that is what we have tried to do through the engagement process and the consultation on them. We have tried to develop indicators that can align T:BUC to the outcomes that we are trying to achieve in order to get to what the key differences are that we need to make right across our society — young people, shared spaces, a safe community and cultural expression — that will have a tangible impact. It is the word "impact" that we are looking for in building good relations. Now that the key differences have been agreed, they can form the basis of the outcomes framework that we produce. We can then really be serious about measuring the impact that T:BUC has. In the absence of those agreed indicators aligned with T:BUC, there was perhaps a bit of a skewed picture.

1338. **Mr Lyttle**: How far off are you from agreeing the new good relations indicators? Will you be able to present those to the Committee in the near future?

1339. **Mrs Farrell**: We will check that out. There will hopefully be a launch, and we will obviously engage with the Committee in advance of that happening.

1340. **Mr Lyttle**: It has been quite a while since they were put under review.

1341. **Mrs Farrell**: They were out to consultation. They went through a couple of consultation periods and work with an advisory group. Peter, is there anything that you want to add?

1342. **Mr Peter Robinson (Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister)**: I just want to add that we have been looking at the departmental funding schemes and the funding schemes that the CRC delivers to ensure that the good relations indicators are incorporated into the application processes that are going out this year. Therefore, when applying for funding, groups have to show what contribution the interventions that they are taking forward are having on the impact of the good relations indicators.

1343. **Mr Lyttle**: We were discussing the Children's Services Co-operation Bill earlier. There are proposals to produce annual reports on performance against the outcomes. Is there any possibility of having annual reporting on performance against good relations outcomes or indicators?

1344. **Mrs Farrell**: Absolutely. It was discussed. We were at a good relations programme board meeting this morning with the Departments involved in delivery. The plan is that they will get guidance on the outcomes-based approach. We have already been working with Departments to develop a number of shared outcomes across all the headline actions. Departments will submit report cards against each of those outcomes, and the programme board will monitor the progress against all of those and then produce a report on the basis of the information received.

1345. **Mr Robinson**: I will just add that, over the next year, we will be working with the funded groups to help them produce similar report cards on the impact on their outcomes.

1346. **Mr Lyttle**: In the absence of that type of report, it would be quite difficult to make an assessment as to what impact the headline actions are, or are not, having.

1347. **Mrs Farrell**: The issue with the headline actions is that a lot were significant projects. There is a lot of work to go through on governance and business cases. We are now entering the stage of true implementation and will be able to measure the real impact of the headline actions as resources flow and the communities start to see the real benefits.

1348. **Mr Lyttle**: You mentioned the contested spaces programme that was co-funded with Atlantic Philanthropies. That seemed to have some really good, positive impacts. One scheme attached to the programme was the nursery-school buddy scheme.

1349. One action in T:BUC is the roll-out of nursery-school and primary-school cross-community buddy schemes. It is my understanding that that action rests with the Department of Education. Do you have any update on the status of the business case being progressed to roll it out?

1350. **Mrs Farrell**: The latest update from DE is that it is still going through the process. We can certainly seek a further update. Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), which has been delivering a buddy scheme, has been successful in receiving core funding from the Community Relations Council. Again, that was money flowing from the Department to support that work. I think that the amount has increased, in recognition of the work that CRIS has been doing on the buddy scheme.

1351. **Mr Lyttle**: Another key item of T:BUC is to deliver and enhance the good relations impact assessment for all policies across government. I think that that linked in with the paragraph in the Stormont House Agreement that there should be an independent audit of departmental spending to identify

how division in society impacts on the delivery of public services. Is there any update on the progress of that?

1352. **Mrs Farrell**: It was intended that that would be one of the issues taken forward in the context of the proposed equality and good relations commission. While the legislation is under consideration, we are working with the Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council to identify the areas that they can work on within their existing remits and vires. We plan to engage with them further over the next period, and that is one of the specific actions mentioned in T:BUC that we will be looking at.

1353. **Mr Lyttle**: Given that a previous OFMDFM audit costed division at upwards of £1 billion, are there any moves afoot to implement that Stormont House Agreement to conduct an independent audit of all departmental spending?

1354. **Mrs Farrell**: The First Minister and the deputy First Minister have written to Executive colleagues to remind them of that Stormont House commitment and of the structures that are in place already through Delivering Social Change (DSC) and Together: Building a United Community. The head of the Civil Service will follow up shortly with permanent secretaries on that as well to assess how we can look at the cost of division across all the areas while bearing in mind the existing structures in place with DSC and T:BUC.

1355. T:BUC also committed to commissioning research into identifying shared services and the extent of shared service delivery. Again, that is something we will be exploring further.

1356. **Mr Lyttle**: I hope that you get the ministerial support that you need to expedite delivery of those really important issues.

1357. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Linsey, you talked about moving to the implementation phase. One objective that you have to implement is the creation of 10 shared education campuses. Each campus will obviously be a multimillion-pound initiative. How much implementation do you think that you will do this financial year, given that I have just seen that your paper, which we got at 9.08 am today, advises that the budget for the 10 new shared education campuses this year is £200,000?

1358. **Mrs Farrell**: That is £200,000 of resource budget that was bid for from the Department of Education. It secured that bid from the T:BUC allocation to progress business cases. This is the point that I was making about a number of the headline actions: there are a lot of processes to go through, particularly where there is capital build involved. The shared education campuses would be one of those areas. However, DE has advised that the first three successful applications for shared campuses are going through the process now. In fact, one wants to go even further with its application and become more ambitious, and DE is working with that campus. The second call for applications has closed, and DE is considering those applications. Good progress will have been made on business case approvals for the initial three applications and on gearing up for spend to be able to happen on the capital side.

1359. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK. We may have only 10 minutes left before we become inquorate, so I will split the time in two, if that is OK. Alex and David both want in, and Alex is first on the list. You have five minutes.

1360. **Mr Maskey**: Thank you, Chair.

1361. **Mr D McIlveen**: I need only two minutes.

1362. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: Don't tell him, Pike.

1363. **Mr Maskey**: There are a couple of questions that I want addressed. A bit like the Deputy Chair, I do not envy your task, because I am not exactly sure what everybody wants out of the process. Some people expect a light switch to be turned on and we will all be the same in our wee Norn Iron and everything will be wonderful. That will not happen, because we are not all

the same. We are different, and there is nothing wrong with that. The trick is managing to deal with, embrace and respect that difference.

1364. One of the things that concerned me a wee bit came in some of the evidence sessions with people for whom I have immense respect and who have worked a lifetime at the coalface and at interfaces. Sometimes I felt like handing some of them an elephant. A lot of the focus was on asking, "What do you mean by 'sectarianism'? You haven't told us what you mean by that". I might have a definition, and somebody else might have a different definition. Those are people who are genuinely trying to grapple with what they can do. I am very appreciative of the work that has been done on summer camps and very keen to see how they work out. I have no doubt that there will be difficulties, because how do you measure some of the outcomes?

1365. The Chair was pressing you on how many engagements you have to have regarding a camp: one before, one during the camp and one afterwards. However, you are talking about organisations that are working around the clock all year round and are funded to work on those issues. Surely there could not possibly be a one-day prep meeting, the camp itself and another day for assessment. There has to be a continuum of work. The people who are doing the camps are going to be people who are doing such work anyway.

1366. I am certain that there will be people trying to get camps organised this year that are to be as much around diversionary work, and that may be a bit challenging. I have been at residentials with young people, and some of them involve taking people away in the summer, giving them diversions and challenging them on some of their ideas. Some of the sessions were quite good. How do you measure the outcomes from that, because to do so is quite difficult? Good luck with all of that.

1367. The design is critical. When we held the round-table and other discussions, including our evidence sessions, people were saying in general terms, "OFMDFM officials are very good. They're out there a lot and are attending all the meetings". However, there were some issues raised around co-design. Has co-design been properly taken on board between the Department and organisations that have been doing great work for a long time?

1368. I am interested in what kinds of clear outcomes you have in mind when you engage with stakeholders, because it is a two-way process. You cannot bring all the answers. You are bringing resources and government commitments. We want people to co-design, but we also want them to tell us what they mean. I have asked people, "What do you mean by that?" I know people who are working very well in interface areas, but they are never going to move to the other side of the interface, so let us get real on some of this. Do they always challenge each other? No, they do not. Sometimes they do not challenge themselves. It is difficult, and there is a lot of work to be done. I do not underestimate the difficulties involved.

1369. To make sure that this becomes organic in the longer term, what kinds of challenges are we putting into the process from your end, where you deal with stakeholders, who, as I say, are, for the most part, excellent and doing great work? I am just glad to see that there is a commitment through T:BUC to giving added support, but there has to be a two-way process as well as additional resource.

1370. **Mrs Farrell**: To me, there is a subtle difference between consultation with stakeholders and co-design. That is perhaps something that has taken all of us a bit of time to understand and get out heads around. Consultation has traditionally meant us going out to stakeholders with our ideas and asking them what they think of them. The approach that we have used through co-design has involved going out with more of a blank page and saying, "Here is what we are trying to do. Here's the outcome that we

are trying to get to, which is linked to T:BUC. Now, tell us from your experience how that can best be designed and delivered". That is the approach that we have taken with summer schools and camps, because you are right when you say that it is a two-way thing. We have to tell stakeholders what we are trying to do in government through the Executive, but we need to listen to their experiences and informed opinions from the real world. Then, together we design something that is workable with our processes and governance but that will also meet the needs of the community.

1371. That is something that we have found with the United Youth programme, which we have worked on with the Department for Employment and Learning, and, more recently, the summer schools/ camps programme. You are right: there has to be a challenge back into the community, and that is something that we are trying to build into our subgroup structures. It is no longer the case that there are just statutory agencies sitting around the table. There are community representatives involved, and it is about getting across that there is an onus and responsibility on them to bring the information to us. Collectively, we need to identify what we need to do, and each of us then has to take responsibility for the bits that we can take responsibility for.

1372. Donna, I am not sure whether there is anything to add on summer schools in particular.

1373. **Miss Blaney**: A phased approach was taken. We had the more generic stakeholder engagement-cum-co-design to decide what it should look like. We then had in a specific design team, which had the representatives from statutory organisations and the youth sector. We then had in young people from the Northern Ireland Youth Forum, NEETs and representatives from Bryson and district councils — all the key players. They came up with the current design, which has to be a pilot. At the end of the year, we will take back what we have learnt and ask why things did or did not work. That is the opportunity to introduce the challenge factor.

1374. The fact that we have outcomes is a challenge to the applicants. Therefore, people have been applying for interventions and for camps, but, when they look at our scheme, they will see that it is quite different, is more challenging and intentionally does not deliver the same things. Some people may not like that, but perhaps the scheme is not what they are interested in delivering. We will find that out as we go through the year.

1375. **Mr Robinson**: That is what we are telling you about all the funded groups. At the very start of the application process, we made it clear what the T:BUC priorities and the associated indicators and outcomes are. We said, "This is what we want to achieve. You tell us the best intervention that you can make that will contribute to the advancement of those outcomes and impacts". We like to see the innovative approaches that they come up with, as long as there is a clear link between what they are doing and the T:BUC outcomes and impacts.

1376. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: It is two minutes, David.

1377. **Mr D McIlveen**: No problem, Chair. I will try to keep to that, because I have to go at 4.00 pm as well.

1378. My question is almost a supplementary to what Alex asked. It is on the same theme. I would not be splitting hairs about whether there is one further engagement with Departments or are two. This should be supported by Departments, not led by them, because there are plenty of people who are already doing this work very well, and I suspect that they will be the people who put in the application forms to run the summer camps. We all know that kids are probably the hardest group to reach, so there needs to be a bit of experience and expertise involved to do that.

1379. Bear in mind that, in every single part of our community, most likely on a Friday night, there are dozens upon dozens of community-led or church-led gatherings that involve Protestant, Catholic, Traveller or Polish children. They have

the whole mix there. What can T:BUC do to support those groups, because they are the ones that ultimately will do the continuous work that builds on the strategy? Has any thought been given to having a curriculum for children and youth groups? If all the community-led groups throughout Northern Ireland were putting the same message across, with the support of the Department, with their arms being lifted up by the Department to give them the capacity to do that — it would have to be voluntary, but I do not think that any of them would have any great objections — why would we not tap into what is already there and support it?

1380. Alex is absolutely right that everybody is different, but the message is the same: this is about tolerance and respect. My little girl has tried a few different things on a Friday night, and the message, broadly speaking, is the same but is being taught in a different way. That is a little confusing. If there were a little bit more structure to the whole thing, the Department could find itself a role by giving groups the capacity to get the final outcome that we want?

1381. **Mrs Farrell**: That is a useful point, because one of the things that we grapple with is that structure and standardisation to allow groups the flexibility to do things in the way in which they feel at ease doing them, with some consistency of message. That is something that the children and young people's subgroup could look at when it is up and running.

1382. In recognition of the work that goes on across the community delivered by community workers, community organisations and church- and faith-based groups, those are the groups that we want to see applying for the summer schools and camps. We want to assist and support those groups. This is not about good relations just being the business of Departments but about getting the message out that it is everybody's business. Those are the groups that have the relationships, and, at the end of the day, it is those relationships with young people that are so important. Those groups will be able to reach out to those young people in a way that we, as officials, will never be able to. Therefore, it is really important that we see applications coming from those organisations, and that is something that we have tried to build into the design, specifically for summer schools and camps. Other Departments are doing the same around, for example, cross-community sports and United Youth. They have been tapping into the expertise that is already out there in the community.

1383. **The Chairperson (Mr Nesbitt)**: OK, folks. I am afraid that time has beaten us, but thank you very much indeed, Michael, Peter, Donna and Linsey.

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Report on the Inquiry into Building a United Community – Volume Two

Written Submissions (1-60)

Ordered by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to be printed on 1 July 2015

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THE REPORT REMAINS EMBARGOED UNTIL COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY.

Mandate 2011/16

Fifteenth Report - NIA 257/11-16

Membership and Powers

Powers

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is a Statutory Committee established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, Section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Assembly Standing Order 48. The Committee has a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and has a role in the initiation of legislation.

The Committee has the power to;

- consider and advise on Departmental Budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Membership

The Committee has eleven members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five members.

The membership of the Committee is as follows:

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Mr. Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr. Alex Attwood[14]
Mr. Michael Copeland[3,10,11,12,16,17]
Miss Megan Fearon[5]
Mrs. Brenda Hale[8]
Mr. Alex Maskey
Ms. Bronwyn McGahan[6]
Mr. David McIlveen[15]
Mr. Stephen Moutray[7]
Mr. Jimmy Spratt[4,9,13]

1 With effect from 26 September 2011 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Ms Sandra Overend
2 With effect from 17 April 2012 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Mr Tom Elliott as Chairperson
3 With effect from 23 April 2012 Mr Danny Kinahan was appointed to the committee
4 With effect from 21 May 2012 Mr Tom Buchanan replaced Mr Jimmy Spratt
5 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Megan Fearon replaced Mr Francie Molloy
6 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Bronwyn McGahan replaced Ms Caitriona Ruane
7 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Stephen Moutray replaced Mr William Humphrey
8 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mrs Brenda Hale replaced Mr Trevor Clarke
9 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Paul Givan replaced Mr Tom Buchanan
10 With effect from 15 October 2012 Mr John McCallister replaced Mr Danny Kinahan
11 With effect from 25 February 2013 Mr Robin Swann replaced Mr John McCallister
12 With effect from 11 March 2013 Mr Leslie Cree replaced Mr Robin Swann
13 With effect from 15 April 2013 Mr Jimmy Spratt replaced Mr Paul Givan
14 With effect from 07 October 2013 Mr Alex Attwood replaced Mr Colum Eastwood
15 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr David McIlveen replaced Mr George Robinson
16 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Roy Beggs replaced Mr Leslie Cree
17 With effect from 13 October 2014 Mr Michael Copeland replaced Mr Roy Beggs

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List of Abbreviations

ACNI	Arts Council Northern Ireland
AoH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
BCDA	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
BCRC	Ballymoney Community Resource Centre
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
BRIC	Building Relationships in Communities
CAJ	Committee on the Administration of Justice
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERD	Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CoE	Council of Europe
CRED	Community Relations and Diversity in Education
CRIS	Community Relations in Schools
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CLC	Children's Law Centre
CoE	Council of Europe
CRC	Community Relations Council
CR/CD	Community Relations / Community Development
CRED	Community Relations Equality and Diversity
CSI	Cohesion, Sharing and Integration
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DCGRP	District Councils Good Relations Programme
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DOE	Department of the Environment
DoJ	Department of Justice
DPCSP	District Policing and Community Safety Partnership
DPP	District Policing Partnership
DRD	Department for Regional Development
DSD	Department for Social Development
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECNI	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
EWL	European Women's Lobby
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FETO	Fair Employment and Treatment Order
FSME	Free School Meals Entitlement
GB	Great Britain
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
GRMF	Good Relations Measurement Framework

GRO	Good Relations Officer
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICR	Institute for Conflict Research
ICRED	International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
IRFU	Irish Rugby Football Association
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
LGD	Local Government District
LGR	Local Government Reform
LINI	Landscape Institute Northern Ireland
LORAG	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group
MIFC	Media Initiative for Children
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NBCAU	North Belfast Community Action Unit
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NICEM	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NILGA	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIYF	Northern Ireland Youth Forum
NUS – USI	National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
PCSP	Policing and Community Safety Partnership
PfG	Programme for Government
PHA	Public Health Agency
PSNI	Police Service for Northern Ireland
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RCN	Rural Community Network
RoI	Republic of Ireland
RRO	Race Relations Order
RUC GC	Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
SF	Sinn Fein
SIB	Strategic Investment Board
SOLACE	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers
T:BUC	Together: Building a United Community
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPRG	Ulster Political Research Group
WHO	World Health Organisation
YCNI	Youth Council Northern Ireland
YLT	Young Life and Times



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Appendix 3

Written Submissions (1-60)

List of Written Submissions

1. Armoy Community Association
1a. Armoy Community Association Survey
2. Arts Council of Northern Ireland
3. Ballymena Borough Council
4. Ballymoney Community Resource Centre
5. Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
6. Ballynahinch Support Group
7. Banbridge District Council
8. Belfast City Council
9. Belfast Healthy Cities
10. Carnegie UK Trust
11. Children's Law Centre
12. Committee for the Environment
13. Committee for Finance and Personnel
14. Committee for Social Development
15. Committee on the Administration of Justice
16. Community Arts Partnership
17. Community Relations Council
17a. Community Relations Council Briefing Paper
17b. Community Relations Council Correspondence
18. Co-operation Ireland
19. Department for Employment and Learning
20. Department for Regional Development
21. Department for Social Development
22. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
23. Department of Culture Arts and Leisure
24. Department of Education
25. Department of Justice
26. Derry City Council
27. Early Years
28. Equality Coalition
29. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
30. Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland
31. Forthspring Inter Community Group
32. Foyle Trust for Integrated Education
33. GAA, Irish Football Association, IRFU
34. Glencree Women's Programme
35. Golden D
36. Holywell Trust, Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction

37. Institute for Research in Social Sciences - University of Ulster
38. Interaction Belfast
39. Knox, C Professor & McWilliams, S
40. Landscape Institute Northern Ireland
41. Linking Generations Northern Ireland
42. National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland
43. Newtownabbey Borough Council
44. NIACRO
45. NIAMH (Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health)
46. NICIE (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)
47. Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
48. Northern Ireland Environment Link
49. Northern Ireland Housing Executive
50. Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
51. Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Briefing Paper
51a. Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Correspondence
52. Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership
52a. Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership - Community Profiles for Local Government District (Extract)
53. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
54. Northern Ireland Youth Forum
55. Oakgrove Integrated College
56. Participation and Practice of Rights
57. Playboard Northern Ireland
58. Police Service of Northern Ireland
59. Presbyterian Church in Ireland
60. Rathfriland Resident
61. Rural Community Network
62. Speedwell Trust
63. Start360
64. Strabane District Council
65. Suffolk Community Pocket Plots
66. The Bytes Project
67. The Peace Walls Programme
68. UNISON Northern Ireland
69. University of Ulster
70. Women's Resource and Development Agency
71. Youth Council for Northern Ireland
72. Youth Councils of Newry & Mourne, Armagh, Dungannon
73. Youthnet

Armoy Community Association

Inquiry into Building a United Community Terms of Reference

The Inquiry will:

Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:

Thanks for the opportunity to make contribution to this Inquiry.

The BTUC paper when launched contained really pragmatic opportunities to do real work that I felt would make a difference. I could identify with what would work - because in a community like ours we were already doing some of this. We have since 2001 a Cross community playgroup and for 22 years cross community summer schemes (each just after Tweltfh). across the divide for the past 22 years in what often were difficult times.

And in 2014 notable for having NO Summer scheme due to lack of funding.

And we had over a 100 children attending.

That summer scheme was the basis for starting a community group here at a rural interface area.

So hopes raised and big disappointment on many fronts but most notable unable to access funds for type of programme needed to meaningfully engage Protestant and Catholic young people.

And will this lead to winding down our cross community endeavours.

Thought the BTUC paper in 2013 was there to make it happen for communities like ours.

Context and experience

My experience is based on ‘lived experiences’ -was 18 years old in 1968.

So all my adult life has been in the context of ‘troubles’ and since 1994 involved in a voluntary way in rebuilding community here.

I live in a rural interface area in Armoy North Antrim.

I live in the same place - same land as my ancestors lived when that ‘agricultural census’ of 1803 was carried out - post 1798!

Politics and division - pulling together and being pulled in different directions has been part of the dynamic of this area for generations.

In 1911 Armoy ward was one of the very few wards in the whole of non divided Ireland that was 50% Protestant : 50% Catholic.

We have and live side by side and know about what that reality is.

Back then...

Not much of substance has been written about Armoy.

But it was important in the old Kingdom of Dalriada; the Round Tower signifies an importance back then of place and the people; the Cairn of Peace to commemorate the 1959 World Ploughing contest was a great event; the old Hump Back Bridge was built around the time of the Battle of the Boyne and still looks old and beautiful!

The new Bridge was added just 150 years ago; the Narrow Gauge Railway to connect Ballymoney and Ballycastle and us was closed in July 1950; our connection with Motorbike racing is legendary- Joey Dunlop and the Armoy Armada.

All of this and more is shared history and shared appreciation...

Mixed community - who cares?

But there is a greater reality that not much happens here; two sides can create difficulty - the historical mistrust, lack of representation , being labelled etc in a mixed / interface area can create apathy, indifference , resignation, acceptance and blame culture?

The alternative that creates an energy at interface areas is often conflict, contesting space, disputes etc and if they are packaged in a political divisive manner then the profile of the area and needs etc are raised and addressed? But who needs to or wants to speak for 'the needs' of both Protestants and Catholics? Even real common needs - an equality unfortunately often determined by lack, deprivation etc is ignored.

And that is largely our continuing experience here. There is no given constituency of people to back a few volunteers who step out into that sort of work.

And do politicians and their departments want to back those doing real work that applies across the interface?

Indeed what degree of understanding is there after all these years of what it means and the challenges to building neighbourliness across the divide with those local people who share the same place? It is really fine doing programmes, projects and publicity with interested people but building community with those who are different - where one lives is the acid test. This tests tolerance and overcoming some of the obstacles is not easy - extremely difficult - similar to what happens in the professional arena of politics.

And this area knows about the division , segregation , sectarianism etc and what it is to live at an interface area. But we have strived and ran with an alternative which changes things. But the real work is hard and at present very undervalued.

Inspired by our own politicians

Armoy has seen progress over the past 20 years in rekindling the decency of neighbourliness that was once the hallmark of this rural area.

We also know the realities and resistances - from 20 years experience.

And how was this possible? Simply of what happened in August / October 1994.

And we applaud all our politicians who have taken the brave steps to create circumstances that inspired a small place like us here on the 5th October 1994 to form a cross community group to address real needs of this community.

Since 2001 we have a shared facility literally at the crossroads where one community ends and the other begins. A shared facility used daily for the shared needs of Protestants and Catholics. A shared facility directly opposite where Mervyn Storey MLA was reared. And his journey from here to his political position is important to us.

And in terms of being a mixed community we feel that there is currently a lack of political willingness to help a rural area like this. Yet this is working in spite of having the thinking applied to support places like this build a united community.

The support both financial and moral in the period ~ 1994 to 2004 allowed us to access funds to build a shared community building is in contrast to the apparent pulling back in support since the Executive became operational.

We are left to our own devices to run a shared community centre without financial assistance from any government agencies. There is now a distinct lack of interest - even a reluctance - distaste from agency staff etc to hear or mention this Protestant and Catholic thing. Our political stagnation, polarisation appears to have taken the 'shared' emphasis into something not for now but for the future.

If you talk for the Catholic / Nationalist or Protestant / Unionist side you can be taken seriously but the mixed area is pushed to the margins.

Shared space

It appears that we have a more favourable climate towards acceptance of single identity areas.

We accessed capital through IFI /DSD to build a shared space. Single identity areas and facilities are backed on either side of the divide. However a single mixed identity group with a shared facility that carries all the overheads etc operating at an interface does not have the luxury for volunteer support similar to the social capital existing in a single identity community. This community facility Is used by both sides but to take on the responsibility etc to run with a cross community agenda is still out of kilter with the political context currently operational. So volunteers running with this shared agenda are very few.

This facility was jointly proposed at an open community meeting in 1995 by both a DUP and SF councillor - and at a time when they allegedly were not speaking to one another.

Their willingness to see the real needs of this community was and is still an inspiration that 'needs' can be common despite divergent party political allegiances. So at our interface area - Armoy there is a litany of neglect - of being bypassed.

Yes this mixed area offers the potential to do a lot to show that ordinary people with a great diversity of difference can unite around common needs. Good groundwork has been done on which we could propel this community forward.

Our Centre Tilly Molloy's has allowed the playgroup to operate in a shared centre, allows Surestart to do wonderful work, provides space for a Community pharmacy, cafe, 2 rented flats, rented out public toilets, hairdresser's, Mother and Toddlers group etc In this shared space people get to know what unites them rather than divides them .

All of this managed voluntary. We have been Building the United Community for 20 years .

We are grateful to agencies , government bodies who helped us. And we are Grateful to a whole range of unlikely people who bought into what they could see we were doing. Through use of the facility relationships have been transformed.

And the shared conclusion or shared consensus just hours ago with someone from well across the divide is that this community is ignored because there is not enough trouble here!

Yes it appears that there is a continuing penalty or lack of real interest in a mixed and rural interface area for going about it in a peaceful way?

But the real and enduring legacy here is around relationship building. Shared space, shared facilities , shared needs etc allows ordinary people to get to know one another and they personally value getting to know and even like people across the divide.

Yes there is a shared pride in belonging to a small place that is diverse - has 3 Orange Lodges, 3 Church Halls, GAA club, Rugby Club, Masonic Hall, 2 primary schools and a shared community facility - Tilly Molloy's .

As we reach 20 years of doing this there is a great yearning and confidence that our politicians can start to bat together to give this mixed area a real lift by directing resources here to show that the alternative peaceful way is a viable option to follow.

Many thanks - for what this is worth

Gerry Burns
Sec Armoy Community Association

Armoy Community Association Survey

Inquiry into Building The United Community at Ballymoney Resource Centre
Armoy Community Association
March 2015

Since 1994 the Armoy Community Association have carried out two major audits in the area. One in 1995/ 96 that provided the case/ context for the Community Centre - Tilly Molloy's -opened in October 2001 by DSD - Minister Maurice Morrow.

The professional and independent approach adopted in these surveys/ audits allowed and empowered people and groups to have a say.

Having a say / getting a say' in a rural interface area was a new experience!

For generations - the question was who would/ could speak for a small place like Armoy? The answer - no one. The result was years of neglect - a downward spiral and virtual abandonment of both sides of one community. Despite 20 years of chiselling away we are a poor relation relative to many other single identity areas. We still have a very feeble voice as a single mixed identity group.

We are not taken seriously!

The process of engaging with local people through consultation/ surveys was helpful. It allowed individuals to have a say and in reflection as groups 'among their own sort' it was positive and challenging as it asked hard questions like 'how did / could we get on with one another'?

The downside it raised expectations locally of both Protestants and Catholics. Getting agencies over the past 5 years to take an interest in the views of what the people of Armoy (2009)felt - has been most disappointing. There is no joined up approach; sometimes no approach and sometimes no understanding of the most basics of what we are about!

On the positive side since this survey was conducted I would say 'community relations' in the Armoy area have been 'positively transformed' onwards and upwards even from that positive base of 2009.

People here now feel pretty good about themselves and good about one another. There is a shared trust and confidence in one another. The investments by many agencies over the years have made a real difference.

The stability of the political structures and the work towards peace has helped us in a mixed community like Armoy.

We feel it is a privilege to share some of that experience and journey with your committee.

And we hope those associated with BTUC - politicians and civil servants will some day visit Armoy - see what has been done and what has yet to be done .
Thank you

Gerry Burns
Sec Armoy Community Association

Some findings from Armoy Community Survey 2009

Respondents
165 respondents completed questionnaire
119 females and 46 males
28% in age range 26-40
33% over 55 years

Additional 55 completed by young people

Length of time at current address
64% have lived in Armoy for 21years +
11% 3-5 years
27% have lived in the area for 10 years or less

Housing tenure

79% live in privately owned
14% owned by Housing Executive

Community spirit / community relations (2 questions but results similar)
70% felt community spirit was good or excellent
26% felt it was 'fair'
4% felt it was poor

Stress and anxiety
46% felt that in 'their household' they knew of someone under pressure, stress, anxiety
44% did not

Causes of stress
Health problems 20%
Money problems 18%

Long term health problem
19% had a long term health problem
63% no one with long term health problem

Disability
16% have a physical disability
10% another member of household
70% no one with a physical or sensory disability

Caring responsibilities
20% of households provide regular care for another person - age, state of health or disability

Of the 20% above -
36% would welcome information on financial help
33% would like someone to talk to
27% interested in contact with support organisation re access to aids, advice etc

Community safety
77% always felt safe
17% sometimes felt safe

Housing
49% felt that there was need for more housing
18% there was not
31% saying they did not know one way or the other

Environmental matters
62,% felt road gritting in winter poor or very poor
34% stating road surfaces are poor or very poor
29% unhappy with footpaths(poor or very poor)

Steps to improve general look of Armoy
Improved car parking - 57%
More flower beds / tubs in village - 51%
Clean ups - 46%
Reduction in vandalism - 45%

Views on development of tourism
Development of B&B accommodation- 46%
Walking - 44%
Development of playing pitches - 39%

Factors which would make a positive difference
Respondents were asked to select the five factors which would make the most positive difference to people in their household

Findings
- safer roads, new footpaths (46%)
- activities for young people (43%)
- improved policing (40%)
- more educational opportunities/local classes (37%)
- traffic calming measures in the village (35%)
- opportunities to socialise more (31%)
- better transport (29%)
- better availability of affordable housing (29%)
- more outings for older people (25%)

In this survey the following groups and organisations local or active in the Armoy area were consulted alongside the community survey.

These groups included:

Armoy Pride of the Park Flute Band
Glens Rural Community Group
Armoy Cross Community Playgroup
Church of Ireland
Catholic Church
Armoy Womens Institute
St Olcan's Primary School
Armoy Rugby Club
Orange Lodge
Armoy Over 55s
Dalriada Rural Surestart
Presbyterian Church
Armoy Mother and Toddler Group
Armoy Primary School
Armoy Youth Group
Christian Family Centre - Armoy

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Arts Council of Northern Ireland submission to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community

Introduction

1. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the development and funding agency for the Arts in Northern Ireland. We distribute public money and National Lottery funds to develop and deliver a wide variety of arts projects, events and initiatives across Northern Ireland.

2. The arts provide a rich offering to building peace and a shared future: a safe space where we can explore our many-faceted identities and our hopes for the future as well as appreciate difference and grow common ground; they can nurture a sense of optimism through events such as the City of Culture 2013 and Belfast Culture Night; and, indeed, we have witnessed how arts venues can be a place where genuine encounter can occur. Time and again, we experience the arts reaching across boundaries and division, providing opportunities for us to live life together in ways which serve a society seeking to be shared, healthy and embracing of diversity.

3. The Arts Council welcomes the Inquiry into Building a United Community undertaken by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Overview of Arts Council activity relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference

4. In Northern Ireland, the arts have been used as a component of peace building, helping to bring together communities split by religious, political and ethnic divides.

   There is a variety of arts activity and initiatives occurring across Northern Ireland, in both urban and rural areas, which promote good relations and build a shared future.

   These include:

   - Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities
   - The Intercultural Arts Strategy and Programme
   - The Cultural Funding Scheme
   - The forthcoming Community Arts Strategy
   - Arts Council funded organisations and projects (Exchequer and Lottery funding)
   - The Arts Council Troubles Archive

Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities Programme

5. In February 2013, the Arts Council launched the £3.1m Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities Programme[1]. The programme is rooted in the building of a shared future for Northern Ireland. It supports community groups and local authorities across Northern Ireland and the Border Areas of the Republic of Ireland in tackling the manifestations of sectarianism and racism.

6. The programme encourages the creation of vibrant and attractive shared public space through the use of the creative arts in the public realm, which celebrate life, enhance the physical and natural environment and help people feel part of the community in which they live. The

1 This programme is funded by the European Union's Programme for Peace and Reconciliation (PEACE III)

purpose of this next phase of funding is to build peace and improve community relations through consultation, creative engagement and the development of public artworks.

7. The programme aims to tackle the different forms of segregation and division in their variety of manifestations across Northern Ireland. For example, within the larger urban areas, the programme aims to free the public realm from visible displays of sectarian aggression and intimidation such as graffiti, flags and murals; and within the numerous small villages and rural communities, where displays of the visible trappings of sectarian division are limited, the programme recognises that barriers nonetheless exist and are manifest in a number of ways, including people's ability to move freely and safely about the community.

8. Projects must address one or more of the programme's strategic themes:

   A. Community Cohesion - to provide opportunities for more stable, safer neighbourhoods and develop strong, positive relations between people from different backgrounds.

   B. Regeneration through the Arts - to develop more inclusive civic and cultural identities through the production of high quality artwork for the public realm.

   C. Positive Relations at the Local Level - utilise the arts and arts processes as a means with which to challenge sectarian and racist attitudes and build positive community relations at a local level.

   D. Build Peace and Reconciliation - support progress towards a peaceful, shared and stable society and promote reconciliation through community led programmes of arts activities.

   E. Connecting Communities - utilise the arts and arts processes as a means in which to connect communities throughout Northern Ireland and the Border Areas.

9. The programme prioritises projects that: (1) are cross-community, inter-community, cross-border or inter-cultural, (2) target the participation of young people, (3) target the participation of minority ethnic communities, (4) are located in areas which had little or no participation in the previous Re-Imaging Communities Programme, and, (5) involve the removal of signs of sectarianism / racism along main arterial routes.

   The programme aims to deliver long-term, cross-community and cross border projects which will in turn complement current work by addressing issues of sectarianism, racism and prejudice between communities.

10. An evaluation of Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities Programme will be published in late 2015, following the conclusion of the programme.

11. Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities is an example of local best practice which brings divided communities together and develops shared spaces (Committee Terms of Reference 1). The evaluation of the predecessor programme to Building Peace through the Arts found impacts relating to: the creation of shared spaces; the usefulness of art as a medium; the building and/or strengthening of community/good relations; cohesion, empowerment and ownership; and the projects being catalysts for further improvement[2].

12. In relation to Committee Terms of Reference 2, it should be noted that communities are involved in the decision-making processes of the created artworks and that the evaluation of the first programme highlighted how it included individuals and groups not normally involved in community matters. As such, the arts could be a useful vehicle in the community development work allied to the removal of barriers at interface areas.

2 More information can be found here: http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publicationsdocuments/Re-Imaging_Final_Evaluation.pdf

13. The second phase of the Re-Imaging programme sought to build on the successes of the first phase as well as seeking to address any gaps. The Arts Council recommends the development of a successor programme (a third phase) to Building Peace through the Arts: Re-Imaging Communities when it concludes in 2014. Consolidating and extending the successes to date will help the Northern Ireland Executive build a shared future for everyone in Northern Ireland working in collaboration with communities across Northern Ireland and thus, support the objectives of Together Building a United Community. (Committee Terms of Reference 3).

Intercultural Arts Strategy and Programme

14. The overarching aim of the Arts Council Intercultural Arts Strategy is to increase access to and participation in the arts amongst minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. The strategy was prepared in recognition of the priorities set out in ACNI's five year Strategy, Creative Connections 2007-2012. The strategic themes include:

- Intercultural Engagement - Promoting exchanges between different cultural groups within society.
- Developing the Minority Ethnic Arts Infrastructure - Develop collaborative working, through arts and cultural activity between new and existing communities.
- Using the Arts to develop Community Cohesion - Working to promote cohesion and integration for a shared and better future for all.
- Using the Arts to increase awareness of diversity - Develop understanding of the diversity that exists in Northern Ireland.
- Using the Arts to develop Good Relations - Working to develop good relations between new and existing communities in Northern Ireland.
- Using the Arts as a vehicle to Tackle Racism - Working to tackle racism between new and existing communities in Northern Ireland.

15. The Arts Council has committed £300, 000 over a three-year period to the Intercultural Arts Programme. Launched in May 2012, the programme has a number of elements: Intercultural Arts Grants; Artist in the Community Awards; Minority Ethnic Individual Artists Awards; Intercultural Arts Support Programme.

16. The Interim Evaluation indicates that a future programme should include ongoing development of programme strands (grants programme, support for artists, support and networking opportunities for minority ethnic communities) and ongoing training and support for the Arts Council's Annually Funded clients in providing inclusive and accessible programmes of activities. The final programme evaluation is due in May 2015.

17. As noted above, the Intercultural Arts Programme is based upon the findings of the research contained within the Intercultural Arts Strategy and seeks to use the arts to develop community cohesion, to increase awareness of diversity, to develop good relations and as a vehicle to tackle racism. Using the arts in this way allows the exploration of perspectives relating to sectarianism, division and good relations and the bringing together of divided communities in a manner which builds trust **(Committee Terms of Reference 1).**

18. We advocate the continued development of the Intercultural Arts Programme beyond the lifetime of the current programme in order to build upon the achievements to date. The evaluation of the programme will recommend the trajectory for any succeeding programme to take in the years ahead. It is our view that given the increase in racist attacks this year, continued support remains of strategic importance to building a united community **(Committee Terms of Reference 3)**

Cultural Funding Scheme

19. In September 2013, the Arts Council announced the creation of a Cultural Funding Scheme in collaboration with Belfast City Council to support cultural and community groups. Over a three year period, the scheme will target communities which are less likely to participate in culture and arts due to social, economic or other barriers. Each organisation has committed £450,000 to provide an overall investment of £900,000.

Each of the successful projects must demonstrate the use of arts and culture to address the challenge of social inclusion and demonstrate that they are: Cross-community; Cross-city; Delivered in partnership between arts and community organisations; Benefit hard-to-reach areas and communities.

20. Three of the first four projects to be funded as part of Creative and Cultural Belfast have relevance to building a shared future. They are[3]:

- Abhainn bheo na Fearsaide/The living River Farset - The River Farset gave Belfast its name, but today, it has largely been built over and forgotten. Abhainn bheo na Fearsaide – a partnership between Cultúrlann and Spectrum Centre – will return the Farset to the heart of Belfast through creative workshops, heritage digs and public art.
- Draw Down the Walls 2015 - Golden Thread Gallery is commissioning a new visual arts project that will provoke debate about the 'barriers in our society'. Its vision is to create the conditions needed to imagine a city without barriers.
- Nine Nights - ArtsEkta's Nine Nights will be an outdoor theatre spectacle. Working in partnership with Walk the Plank – producers of the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture event, the Return of Colmcille – Nine Nights will combine music, dance and pyrotechnics, retelling centuries-old Hindu folklore as a thrilling, contemporary Belfast celebration.

21. Funding streams such as this are sound examples of how the Arts Council (together with Belfast City Council) is seeking to develop relations between communities across the city of Belfast and to use the arts to develop spaces as both shared and vibrantly alive. (Committee Terms of Reference 1).

22. Supporting and promoting projects such as those highlighted above is important in helping Northern Ireland tackle the racism and sectarianism and other forms of intolerance (Committee Terms of Reference 3).

23. The second funding round of the Cultural Funding Scheme opened in early September 2014.

The forthcoming Community Arts Strategy

24. Community Arts reaches and speaks to the most marginalised given its underpinning principles of authorship and ownership within an approach of collaborative arts practice. It also reflects the understanding that art is not created in a vacuum but within, and with reference to, a community, embedded within place and identity. Engagement with communities is predicated on sound practice, and with the pursuit of artistic excellence at the forefront of ambition. This is achieved by developing flexible, creative and imaginative responses to local issues, empowering artists, individuals and communities to fulfil their creative potential and address some of the challenges facing Northern Ireland such as poverty and social exclusion.

25. For over three decades the Arts Council has been an advocate of the transformative power of Community Arts. It has encouraged other government departments and funders to support Community Arts practice to help them realise their own policy objectives. These have been in fields such as regeneration; peace-building; community development; and in building

3 The fourth project is - BabyDay - In 2015, Replay Theatre Company will bring the world's first BabyDay to Belfast. BabyDay will decorate the city with playful art and fill the streets with families, much like on Culture Night – but for babies.

confidence and skills amongst marginalised children and young people. **(Committee Terms of Reference 1)**

26. During research for the Community Arts Strategy, our strategic stakeholders told us that they recognise the contribution Community Arts can bring to the social change agenda including: promoting equality of access (economic, social and physical); creating shared spaces; accessing 'hard to reach' sections of the community; bringing communities and generations together. **(Committee Terms of Reference 1)**

27. In community arts, the sector's effectiveness in engagement is a key strength. Consideration could be given to the role of the arts in community engagement in order to achieve Executive objectives such as the removal of interface barriers. **(Committee Terms of Reference 2)**

28. We continue to recommend government departments across the Executive to consider the impact that community arts can make in realising individual departmental objectives. The ability of the arts to nurture, strengthen and challenge the theory and practice of community in equal measure should not be under-estimated. **(Committee Terms of Reference 3).**

29. In 2014/15, the Arts Council will implement a revised Regularly Funded Organisation (RFO) survey in to more accurately measure the quantifiable outputs from all arts organisations working in community contexts. We will publish the findings of the revised RFO Survey.

Arts Council funded organisations and projects (Exchequer and Lottery funding)

30. In 2013, the Arts Council distributed over £13m to its core funded arts organisations through the Annual Funding Programme (AFP) which is designed to support organisations to deliver year round arts programmes. These organisations represent the Arts Council's primary means of engaging with local communities by taking their work to new audiences via outreach schemes and audience development initiatives.

By way of example, two Arts Council annually-funded organisations with a high level of cross-community work are Greater Shantallow Community Arts and Arts for All.

31. In addition, in the Regularly Funded Organisation Survey 2011/12 (published in February 2013), it is reported that 69% of arts activity was described as crosscommunity in nature, involving a mix of individuals from both the main community backgrounds. This does not necessarily mean that activity was designed to strengthen cross-community relationships; rather that it simply involved a balance of individuals from more than one community background. However, the impact of encounter in a shared setting has a number of benefits including: building respect, sharing common interests and breaking down the perception of difference.

32. In July 2014, the Arts Council announced Lottery project funding awards to fifty-four organisations amounting to £1.5m. By way of example, three funded projects impact upon how the arts build community relations and allow encounter in shared spaces to occur. These are:

- Culture Night Belfast: CNB encourages audiences to explore and engage in new arts activities with many activities coming alive in public squares and streets, resulting in a vibrant celebration of the cultural life of Belfast city. It brings life, laughter and a sense of family-friendly fun to Belfast.
- North West Carnival Initiative: This organisation aims to promote participation in and production of high quality carnival arts and performance in the North West, and support communities in celebrating and showcasing their work, reflecting the cultural diversity of the city.
- Spectrum Centre: The Spectrum Centre aims to build partnerships and increase the number of Belfast wide events taking place at the centre, support community arts programmes and contribute to the Greater Shankill Neighbourhood Action Plan through

activities which address reconciliation, social awareness, community engagement and education.

33. In addition, Arts Council Lottery funded projects including the Small Grants Programme and Public Art Programme can support the development of community cohesion. An example of this is:

• Artichoke: In April 2014, the Arts Council awarded funding towards the development of a large public art project for the Derry/L'Derry area. 'Temple' will be created by internationally renowned sculptor, David Best through extensive city-wide engagement and aims to bridge divisions through a programme of cross-community work leading to a public light performance on International Day of Peace (September 2015). Temple will see the creation of a citywide shared platform through the delivery of apprentice, back-to-work and voluntary training schemes, aimed at fostering ownership while addressing the movement towards a One City. **(Committee Terms of Reference 1, 2 and 3).**

The Arts Council Troubles Archive

34. The Arts Council will soon launch its Troubles Archive, a digital archive containing many of the key artistic works that were created against the backdrop of the Northern Ireland Troubles. It has been produced in recognition of the contribution that the arts make to our understanding of the Troubles, and of the impact that the conflict has had upon the arts in Northern Ireland. We will continue to develop the depth and scope of material as we build this unique, comprehensive record. **(Committee Terms of Reference 1)**

Closing Comments

35. Together Building a United Community notes its commitment to the continued use of the arts as a means of improving good relations. The Arts Council welcomes this commitment and will continue to build upon its support to organisations and projects which enhance community relations and cohesion.

Ballymena Borough Council

Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)

Evidence on behalf of

Ballymena Borough Council

Contact: Greg Dornan - Head of Policy

September 2014

BALLYMENA BOROUGH COUNCIL
Good Relations Unit

Inquiry into
Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)

E V I D E N C E

1. **Introduction**

1.1 Brief introduction to persons or organisations completing evidence -perhaps also stating area they work in/experience

This evidence has been completed on behalf of Ballymena Borough Council's Good Relations Unit. This Unit has responsibility for managing Council's Good Relations function, which includes delivery of its Good Relations Strategy which is underpinned by the Together: Building a United Community Strategy

Set out any factual evidence in relation to this term of reference which the committee might be able to draw conclusions from. Also include any recommendations for action that you would like the committee to consider in relation to this term of reference

2. **Explore perspectives on sectarianism , division and good relations including**

- An examination of theory and practice with regard to Good Relations, Shared Space and Shared Services
- Consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing Shared Space and Shared Services

Comment

OFMDFM, as the Department responsible for TBUC, should establish a panel of experts to undertake a review of these areas to include both an academic literature review, statistical analysis around these areas both locally and internationally together with a best practice review. A key element of this review should focus on the best practice from the outcomes of a range of programmes, including the District Council Good Relations Programme, work with the local Police and Community Safety Partnership, Neighbourhood Renewal, Race Relations Strategy, Peace III Programme and any other relevant intervention that would have a Good Relations element.

Best Practice information sharing programmes should be established to deliver best practice in other areas. This should be delivered either through the Community Relations Council or the proposed newly revised Equality Commission in conjunction with District Council Good Relations Programmes

Good Relations should be an overarching key principle of the new enlarged Councils and a core theme within each area's new Community Planning process. This would afford each local area an opportunity to address their key needs and deliver suitable interventions, involving both relevant Community and Statutory Agencies working at an appropriate level.

3. **Seek views on what Good Relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This may include :**

   - Seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface areas to be removed;
   - examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly the removal of interface barriers; and
   - consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of Government interventions

   COMMENT

   Community Planning will be an excellent vehicle for each new Council to use for delivery of a comprehensive, cohesive local solution to the issue of interfaces. Each new Council area is diverse with different Good Relations issues which are specific to their area; therefore, Community Planning will ensure all voices are considered when reaching local interventions and solutions.

   It will be incumbent on Central Government to continue to Resource Local Authorities to promote Good Relations at a local level to maximise the Key Themes emanating from TBUC.

4. **Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision making with regard to Building a United Community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.**

   COMMENT

   Council's Good Relations Strategy's aims are" Create a Climate for Change" and "Promote Provision of Shared Space" which complement the Key Themes in TBUC. Council's Good Relations Unit will continue to work in partnership with key local players to deliver on this Strategy's Themes.

   It is vital OFMDFM continue to manage the delivery of a comprehensive, effectively resourced, Good Relations Strategy which gives delivery bodies opportunities to effect change in their areas.

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre

For the community, by the community, with the community.

Submission from Ballymoney Community Resource Centre to the OFMDFM Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community

8 October 2014

Response prepared by Lyn Moffett

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Background Information

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre (BCRC) provides a support network for community and voluntary groups; providing advice, guidance and information on community development issues, projects and funding; as well as focused support to areas of weak community infrastructure (Including three Small Pockets of Deprivation). BCRC is committed to promoting universal rights and addressing inequalities and also manages an Ethnic Minority and Migrant Workers Support Project for the Causeway Coast and Glens area, a CRC core funded Community relations Programme, a Reaching Out: Connecting Older People's project and a Disability Development Programme. BCRC organises events, seminars, conferences, and the website and newsletter promote the work of the local community and voluntary sector. Other services include needs analysis, research and evaluation, use of venue and office equipment etc. BCRC is particularly active in promoting cultural diversity and equality. As most of our area of influence is rural, we are also very active in addressing issues of rural isolation and inequality.

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre aims:

To articulate the voice of the community and voluntary sector and provide a link to policy and decision making at local and regional level;

To promote and facilitate relevant training and capacity building initiatives to the community and voluntary sector in the NE, in order to increase group capacity and sustainability;

To promote good relations and build social capital throughout the new Causeway Coast and Glens council district;

To promote a networking culture;

To manage and develop the Disability Programme;

To manage and develop the Ethnic Minority and Migrant Workers support programme;

To provide support and services to older people;

To provide relevant, accessible information to community and voluntary groups to aid the advancement of their community and work.

RESPONSE

Ballymoney Community Resource Centre welcomes this opportunity to make a submission to the enquiry on Together: Building and United Community from the perspective of community development and community relations practitioners, some of whom have in excess of 20 years experience of working in conflict resolution and peace-building.

1.1 If the strategy is committed to exploring perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations, including theory and practice, it is essential that representatives of all sections of society are included in the research, planning and implementation – this has to be an inclusive bottom–up and top-down process, not one that is imposed on grassroots communities.

1.2 There is no real acknowledgement of the need still to deal with the past and the legacy of the conflict. There also needs to be much greater recognition of the role that civic society can play in implementing this strategy – local communities are cast very much in a support role for statutory agencies rather than as key players. It is essential that the voices of young people, victims and survivors, interface communities, prisoners, ex combatants, women and others are fully included in the implementation of TBUC. A cohesive, united community can only become a reality if the concept is embraced at all levels of society and the contribution to peace-building by grass roots activists acknowledged. There is no 'one size fits all' solution, and while learning from other international conflicts or even sharing good practice around Northern Ireland can be valuable, every area is unique and policy makers and practitioners must take this into consideration.

1.3 BCRC believes that in order to bring people and communities together and build stronger relationships founded on trust greater emphasis should be placed on developing and implementing plans to address the following:

- Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling disadvantage. We have to demonstrate a real commitment to addressing the 'hard issues'. Tackling the 'multiple social issues effecting and entrenching community separation, exclusion and hate' should be a short term aim. This fits well with the theme of 'community

renewal' and is of particular importance in areas of relative deprivation. It is particularly important in times of recession that addressing social deprivation should continue to be a priority, to avoid even more 'protectionism', envy, fear and mistrust of other communities.

- Tackling the visible manifestations of racism, sectarianism, intolerance and other forms of prejudice. Cultural identity, including issues around flags and emblems, murals, bonfires, cultural expression, language and popular protest' should be addressed as soon as possible and not left as a long-term goal. We must not underestimate the power that these forms of cultural expression have to affect good community relationships at all levels of society, with territorial marking and contentious parades cementing segregation and division.
- Encouraging shared neighbourhoods and reducing and eventually eliminating segregated services must be goals for the immediate future, resourcing segregated services cannot be sustained in times of recession.
- Adopting a zero tolerance approach to all incidences of, and reasons for, attacks motivated by sectarian, religious, racist hatred or prejudice, including those on symbolic premises, cultural premises and monuments;
- Creating a new and improved framework for the management and regulation of public assemblies including parades and protests. Rasharkin and Dunloy are both in Ballymoney Borough, and a new and improved framework for the resolution of public assembly disputes is essential as members of both traditions are highly critical of recent determinations by the Parades Commission. We need only to look back to the extended periods of community tension and conflict during recent marching seasons to see that this must be a priority. There will still be a need for a politically independent organisation to act as an arbiter in parading disputes, however.
- Achieving the full participation of all sectors in all aspects of society;
- Supporting local communities to resolve local issues through local solutions;

1.4 Working with **young people,** both through formal education and through street intervention initiatives is of primary importance, and should start immediately and be permanently ongoing. Anti-social behaviour has an adverse affect on intergenerational relationships as well as on community safety and fear of crime, plus

there is a perception (not always accurate) that young people are heavily engaged in erecting flags, building bonfires, protests and riots etc

1.5 Education is key, particularly integrated education from early years, but there must be recognition that community education and participative learning is as important as formal education, and that there is no 'one size fits all' solution for building the capacity of our young people to engage with the peace process and become active citizens. Street intervention programmes, 'dream schemes' and sports programmes have all been used to good effect when working with disaffected young people.

1.6 However, we have to get beyond the 'contact theory' of the 1970s – yes it is good to bring young people from different community backgrounds together to learn, train, play sport, go on holiday together, but these can't be short term, one off initiatives or opportunities for people to work or play together. Relationships built on trust take time to develop, and the foundations for building relationships will only bear real weight when all services including education are truly shared. This will also have benefits for the economy.

1.7 This is the third policy statement to be released since the 1998 Agreement. Shared Future was a vision that many practitioners in the Community and Voluntary Sector and others could work towards. Cohesion, Sharing and Integration lacked substance and failed to meet the needs of many of the Section 75 groups, not to mention victims and survivors and ex-combatants. Together: Building and United Community has diluted the vision of a Shared Future even further. Unless our political, civic and community leaders show a real commitment to implementing this document and addressing the hard issues through a detailed action plan, which is adequately resourced, this too will end up on the shelf and communities will become more polarised rather than more united.

1.8 It is important to nurture leadership at local level – there is a great deal of work to be done with our elected representatives to encourage them to become transformative leaders and to take responsibility for good relations in their boroughs without disappearing into their traditional political silos. It is essential that community leaders

and grass roots activists are also empowered to speak and act for their communities, and that their voices are listened to with respect. Together: Building a United Community must become part of the foundations for each new council's Community Planning process.

1.9 While it is important that local councils are part of a delivery process for good relations work, and that they are encouraged to accept their statutory obligation to promote good relations, it is hard to believe that all of the new councils will step up to the mark, set aside political difference, and make decisions based on the common good. Local council good relations officers are competent and committed, but levels of commitment amongst councillors fail to inspire confidence.

1.10 If the Together: Building a United Community policy document is to be effectively implemented it must be adequately resourced, and those resources must be distributed via a mechanism that is politically independent, transparent and accountable to the public.

Ballynafeigh Community Development Association

Response to TBUC Inquiry by OFMDFMNI Assembly Committee

Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (BCDA) welcomes this opportunity provided by the committee to input into this Inquiry.

Background to BCDA

Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (BCDA) was established in 1974 during that turbulent period in Northern Ireland when so many people were hastening to the perceived safety of living with their 'own kind' in an endemic movement towards social separation which prevails to this day.

Conversely, many Ballynafeigh residents came together to protect the mixed/shared nature of their district, a brave endeavour because, although the promotion of mixing and sharing of people and place were ideas that they themselves valued, these beliefs were out of kilter with what was actually happening on the ground. Nevertheless, BCDA's founding goals were to foster good community relations, a sense of belonging to a diverse neighbourhood and to promote the principles and practice of community development.

BCDA's Learning from Shared Neighbourhood Work

BCDA has also long recognised that shared neighbourhoods like Ballynafeigh don't happen by accident. It is not enough to build housing estates and designate them as 'shared' or to create a 'charter' for a shared neighbourhood and ask residents to 'sign up to' or 'buy into 'it.

Rather, a great deal of conscious effort and careful people investment must be expended to ensure that the essential network of relationships between individuals and groups are developed and sensitively supported in order to generate and maintain these shared living spaces.

Furthermore, perhaps the most significant of the lessons learned from all BCDA's work on both shared neighbourhood reinforced in our emerging interdependence work to date, has been that although communities and neighbourhoods can be shared, this does not make dealing with the issues they face any less difficult.

Conversely, BCDA has also found that solutions to these difficulties can arise directly from the daily operational infrastructure of a shared neighbourhood like Ballynafeigh, often unexpectedly, and that these can quickly alleviate or suggest alternative approaches to dealing with seemingly intransigent problems.

The skill is in recognising these opportunities as and when they arise, so that they can be acted on immediately. Practitioners operating in a shared neighbourhood context to deliver community development initiatives, must be capable of empathetically responding to this complexity. Critically, they must also be able to foster and support the development of crucial personal relationships, those all important social bonds representing the social capital of a shared neighbourhood; a process which BCDA characterises as the 'generation and regeneration of the social fabric of the district'

Points to the Inquiry

- BCDA is very concerned that the TBUC Initiative, while acknowledging shared spaces and places, does not provide for the sustaining and regeneration of existing shared neighbours. There is much attention paid to establishing new shared neighbourhoods and urban villages but no attention paid to the learning from existing practice and the networks that have been built over time.

- BCDA is Pessimistic about the impact of TBUC because the real impacts of previous government initiatives such as Shared Future and Cohesion Sharing and Integration amounted to nothing. TBUC has been "live" now for around 18 months and has yet to deliver on its grand promises. We fear that the policy document may be yet another set of gestures without substance.
- In our day to day work with groups on the ground we are still encountering the contentious issues that have sustained and continue to sustain division and are in danger of sustaining the Conflict. This strongly indicates that the divisions in our society still run deep and are strongly felt. BCDA is greatly concerned by the decreasing amount of funding which is available for peace and reconciliation work.
- All government, and especially Stormont, needs to be demonstrating a positive attitude of leadership. This would generate energy and morale around peace building and reconciliation and enable us as a society to move forward.

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Ballynahinch Support Group

I am a volunteer with this Charity in Ballynahinch.

I am interested in and the care and well being of all involved, in the Charity and the Charity itself.

1 Communities to be involved and actively in all aspects of life, living and community life and for all.

2 Communities to be appropriately and actively involved in prevention, care, health and well being, education, research, professional training, safety, finance and for all.

3 Communities to be involved and actively in improving, updating and maintaining all services and for all.

4 Communities to be involved and actively in professional, reviewed, researched, up to date, regular, feedback and monitoring on the above areas of community living, to take place, continue and at all times for all.

5 More and availability of opportunities and to take place for the above and to happen and progress to be maintained and appropriately developed for all.

6 More opportunities for and of encouragement of concerns, worries, anxieties, stresses to be shared and resolved equally in and by communities to further enhance community life, it's well being for all to share and enjoy.

7 More opportunities and for appropriate recognition and outcomes to be shared and awarded to and by all communities for their contribution, work, input and service into the daily life experienced and lived in communities and by all.

8 Appropriate representatives to be appointed and professionally trained, where and when needed and required to further lead communities, community life and for all to share in any difficulties that may arise and to share responsibilities and favourable outcomes, results for all to manage and support, protect equally and for the future.

9 More opportunities and for global contribution, input, service and help to be included, maintained and returned by and in all communities and for the future, for everyone's well being and health to be achieved and shared.

10 More opportunities and awareness and for events to take place and to enable all this to happen and in communities and life for all.

Banbridge District Council

Appendix A

OFMDFM - Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Draft suggestions

- Much work has been carried out and progress made in relation to building a shared community and this should be recognised, with lessons learnt and best practice examples built upon.
- In planning for the future we would suggest bring people together around shared agendas which are affecting society today for example: poverty, employment and health issues to include mental health this builds relationships, friendships, reconciliation and in the long-term a sustainable civic society. Recognition needs to be given to civic society, how they succeed / succeeded.
- Whilst there is a need to address good relations issues directly, often groups and individuals can usefully be brought together around a different, but common agenda. This could be used as a means to bring people from diverse backgrounds together through uniting people over shared issues, therefore the theme of "difference" is not the dominating factor. This has been used in England wherein people from neighbouring estates where a gang culture was in operation where brought together through the formation of a community choir, which performed a range of songs that were acceptable to all. Too much focus on "difference" can lose the what we need to achieve, more emphasis on what is common required.
- Sport, the arts and creative medium can be used as a means through which to engage a wide range of people from differing backgrounds. However we would suggest that this should include additional sports beyond Rugby and Football.
- The importance of youth work and education within schools from an early age in terms of promoting shared agendas and acceptance of difference is viewed as a positive contribution towards addressing sectarianism and division.
- The role of local communities in being enabled to contribute effectively towards policy and decision making is of key importance. We would advocate a grass roots community development approach to support local people have their views and voices heard. However there is also a need to ensure that the voices being heard are representative of the wider population.
- Facilitated discussion and mediation with all those who are involved in the peace process and who have influence within their local communities is useful in terms of continuing to advance towards a shared community and creating ways to move forward.
- We would suggest the funding environment would support this shared agenda and community based approach that would enable individuals and groups to come together on an agreed basis.
- Conflict, mediation and community integration have been well researched and we would suggest that the findings from the research are promoted in developing funding streams to support community intervention.
- There is a clear need to ensure that monitoring and evaluation measures are robust and based upon evidence based research. In times of budget constraint it is imperative that value for money, accountability and results are demonstrated through all the existing fora and funded activity, with clear strategic leadership and evidence based operational planning and review.

- Often money is not the deciding factor, but rather how engaged and committed individuals and groups are to the process and therefore creativity and best practice would be welcomed in order to develop new ways of working. We would welcome new approaches and longer term evidence based strategies for intervention.
- Building a United Community requires attitudinal and cultural change. Attitudes and cultures are perpetuated over the centuries; therefore it is inevitable that change will take a long time. In order to reflect this, we would suggest a long term policy approach with a 20 year strategic plan.

Ten key points:

1 The strategy needs to be ambitious focussing on relationship building and reconciliation as a prerequisite for long-term peace.

2 Definitions of good relations, racism and sectarianism are required. Any definitions should meet international standards and obligations to ensure the development of good practice.

3 Adequate, long term, outcome focused and accessible resourcing for Peace building work is needed on-the-ground, as well as funding for cross Departmental commitments. This financial investment would reflect the priority in government given to the achievement of reconciliation, partnership, equality and mutual trust and a society free from sectarianism, racism and intolerance.

4 Interface work should be about more than just barrier removal. It should be informed by practice on the ground, as well as providing structured support for regeneration initiatives which lead to and enable, the eventual creation of open and vibrant communities free from fear, threat or any obstacle to interaction across the region. Not all barriers are structural.

5 Co-ordination of reconciliation efforts on a regional basis should be facilitated by a regional body, including the management and allocation of long term funding, as well as developmental support for organisations working within communities at a grass roots level.

6 A major rethink of how larger and significant budgets such as education, housing, community development, regeneration, justice and culture intersect and present opportunities for reconciliation and peace-building is also necessary. And how will these be incorporated into “Community Planning” with the new super councils.

7 Proper research and a robust evidence base for the scale and complexity of the challenges in building the peace and reconciliation is required, and should examine and report on the benefits to society (including the public purse) of transforming relationships within Northern Ireland, North and South and between these islands

8 Development of strong structures within government responsible for cross departmental activities is critical. These structures should promote linkages to communities, providing a balance between the need for government to manage, along with civic society’s right to influence. This also includes the identification and empowerment of drivers and champions for the delivery of the strategy within each department.

9 Adequate development, monitoring and accountability arrangements within government should involve civic society.

10 The planning process is started now to build on TBUC in the development of the next reconciliation and peace-building plan that involves civic society in its planning and production.

11 There needs to be a recognition that patriarchal societies have major influence on good relations / peace building / reconciliation and we require recognition to address this in helping our society to develop.

Belfast City Council

OFMDFM Committee Inquiry into the Together Building A United Community Strategy Draft Belfast City Council Response

Introduction

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to submit the enclosed information to the Committee of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister as part of its inquiry into the Government's Together Building a United Community Strategy.

As the Council understands it, the Inquiry seeks to undertake the following:

- Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:
  - an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
  - consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;
- Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:
  - seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
  - examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
  - consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.
- Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Belfast City Council hopes that the following may assist the Committee in its tasks and is happy to provide any follow-up information should this be required.

Response

1. Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:
   - an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
   - consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;

Through all-party agreement, Belfast City Council adopted "Promoting Good Relations" as a key corporate objective in 2001 and established a dedicated Good Relations Unit within the organisation. It developed an initial Good Relations Strategy in 2003 which was underpinned by the reconciliation theory outlined by Hamber and Kelly.

The Council's own Good Relations Strategy states that we "will encourage and support good relations between all citizens, promoting fair treatment, understanding and respect for people of all cultures". The principle of equality of opportunity underpins the Council's approach to all good relations issues.

The Council set up a Good Relations Steering Panel in 2004 – later becoming the Good Relations Partnership – and developed a City-wide Good Relations Plan in 2007. The purpose of this plan was aimed at "tackling sectarianism and racism & promoting cultural diversity". The underpinning objectives of the plan were to:

- Secure Shared City Space
- Transform Contested Space
- Promote Shared Cultural Space
- Build Shared Organisational Space.

Within this, the Council developed a series of 'shared space principles'. It is important to understand that 'shared space' is not neutral space; it is a place where ones identity can be expressed in an open and non-hostile environment. Shared space should therefore be:

- **Welcoming** - where people feel secure to take part in unfamiliar interactions, and increase an overall sense of shared experience and community
- **Accessible** – well-connected in terms of transport and pedestrian links within a network of similar spaces across the city and managed to promote maximum participation by all communities
- **Good quality** – attractive, high quality unique services and well-designed buildings and spaces
- **Safe** – for all persons and groups, and trusted by both locals and visitors.

The Good Relations work of the Council is 75% funded by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister under the District Council's Good Relations Programme. Each year the Council develops an annual Action Plan, which is based on an independent audit of Good Relations needs within the City. The Action Plan seeks to develop programmes that can address the issues within the audit and also challenge others to embed these shared space principles into all activity. Most of the activity in the Action Plan is delivered through a grants programme by third party community and voluntary organisations, or through direct delivery by Council officers. The Action Plan is targeted at areas such as work around interfaces, bonfires, decade of centenaries, participation & inclusion of migrant and minority ethnic communities, mural replacement programmes and training.

In relation to Council delivered programmes, the funding is targeted at those programmes and projects that primarily contain interactive activity on specific Good Relations issues. Therefore, the following criteria are a central component for participation in Council funded or delivered programmes:

- Ideally programmes and projects should contain participation that is cross community. However it is also recognised that some groups require single identity projects, which can be supported on the understanding that this LEADS to inter-community engagement.
- Projects that demonstrate 'interactive' engagement between participants will command a higher score for funding than those where engagement is 'social' or 'passive'.
- Interactive dialogue commands the highest funding award, in recognition of the reality that this will have the best Good Relations outcomes.
- Good Relations events will be open to all and there will be no elements (music/flags/ bunting etc) that the general public could perceive as being offensive present at such events.
- Generally projects should achieve an outcome that facilitates participants in respecting differences through greater understanding of the 'other'.

The Good Relations Unit is a small unit of staff and therefore it relies on the role of community leaders in actual delivery of projects. The Council sees its role as being to support

them in the delivery of projects at a neighbourhood level under the above criteria. This can be challenging for local workers. However as a Unit, the Good Relations team in the Council spend a lot of their time in relationship building and fostering trust between the Council and community leaders. This in itself is a crucial engagement process in the task of building Good Relations within the City.

The Council, as the Civic leader in the City, sets the criteria, vision and envisaged outcomes for Good Relations work – but delivery is reliant on buy-in from community leaders, community groups and the general public.

Good Relations Partnership

The Good Relations Partnership is a working group of the council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Partnership is comprised of political and external representatives, which deals with issues around equality, good relations, sectarianism, racism and cultural diversity. This group was formed to include cross-party representation in addition to people from a range of other sectors, including minority ethnic organisations, churches, central Government, statutory, trade unions, business, and the community and voluntary sectors to ensure that it is as representative of the wider community. It is the only council working group to include external representatives in recognition of the importance of being accountable to, and engaging with the wider community on good relations issues. It has been central to gaining the political and community buy-in to Good Relations practice and delivery in the City and adds 'external voices' to the challenges faced by the political make-up of the Council.

Shared Space

The "welcoming, accessible, good quality & safe" principles, as detailed above underpin the development of shared space in Belfast and should be reflected in the design, programming and management of project activity, particularly emerging capital projects.

PEACE III

It is important to note the significant contribution made by the European Union's support for peace building and reconciliation work funded under the various PEACE Programmes.

Many worthwhile projects have been delivered in Belfast and the Council has led the delivery of a successful local action Plan under the current PEACE III programme which is now drawing to a close.

The opportunities presented by the proposed new PEACE IV Programme have also been welcomed by the Council as reflected in its submission to the Special EU Programmes Body's consultation on the Draft Operational Programme for PEACE IV.

Collaborative approach

There is a huge transformative potential of major developments which have Good Relations and Shared Space principles at their core. City master plans, community planning, transport networks and other major initiatives all have the potential to build better relationships between people from different neighbourhoods. Such projects can facilitate the opening up of civic space, collaboration at a local level on development, networking of ideas and ultimately promote local engagement and relationship building.

There is a need for increased consideration of shared space principles and good relations impacts of major infrastructure/ capital projects. .

Some examples of projects that demonstrate good practice

1. Preventing a return to conflict:

From 2010 – 2011, 3 ex-prisoners organisations got together to develop 2 booklets called "Preventing a return to conflict" and "Time stands still". The first of these booklets was a summary of the experiences of former Republican and Loyalist Prisoners of prison life. They sought to deromanticise prison life by detailing their experiences. This booklet was then used for workshops with young people involved in interface conflict and the result was a reduction in incidents at one notorious interface flashpoint area in Belfast. The second booklet sought to document the forgotten experiences of the partners, wives and children of prisoners. Their powerful story brought different communities together in a common human experience and provided former prisoners with a story that had not been heard before. These booklets had a number of outcomes: a sharing of a common story between former enemies, greater understanding of the reality of prison life, education for young people who were 'romanticising' conflict and prison life, the reality of the experiences of families of prisoners and a reduction in interface conflict.

2. Creating Cohesive Community project

This was led by LORAG and South Belfast RoundTable and was funded under the PEACE III Programme. The project sought to promote cohesive community relations in south Belfast and tackling discrimination & prejudice and building links between migrants and host communities. It targeted mainly the Roma community in an effort to foster greater education and cultural awareness as well as providing social activities for young people to interact and integrate.

3. Decade of Centenaries Programme

The Council has led on a series of actions and activities to support the City in marking and commemorating the current Decade of Centenaries. In 2011 the all-party group of Councillors agreed to a series of Principles around which the Decade of Centenaries would operate. Following this agreement the Good Relations Unit facilitated Members in developing a series of programmes to cover three areas, the first of which would be the 1912 – 1914 period. For this period, the Council produced a unique exhibition entitled "Shared History, Different Allegiances". The exhibition incorporated the events of the signing of the Ulster Covenant, the Gaelic Revival, the Larne and Howth gun running, the Suffragette movement and the rise of the Labour movement. There were huge numbers from across the political divide who viewed the exhibition. In addition there were a series of talks and events held which drew large numbers in a programme that brought people together for a joint exploration of our common history.

Other examples of good practice include:

- an inter-agency joined up collaborative approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and needs of young people especially around interfaces in the city.
- Drawing Down the Walls Project and associated re-imaging programmes
- Creative Legacies Project led by Belfast City Council's Tourism, Culture & Arts Unit
- Numerous Good Relations and intervention programmes funded by the Council and OFM/DFM and delivered by community and voluntary organisations

2. Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural.

This might include:

- seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
- examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and

- consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.

In 2011, Belfast City Council agreed to a notice of motion on interfaces which called for work to begin to seek to remove all barriers within the City. This was a political initiative. Following this motion, the Good Relations Unit in the Council developed a 'framework for action' to put together a series of interventions to begin this process within the City. Also in 2011, the Community Relations Council developed a guide to tackling interface issues. It cannot be stressed enough of the importance of putting communities at heart of any process with regard to any intervention on interface barriers. The two underpinning principles to the Council's work on interfaces are that the safety and security of those living closest to any barrier is paramount & nothing will be done to any barrier without the involvement and consent of those living closest to it. Those who live closest to interface barriers must be willing to consent to change and this involves intensive, effective engagement and communication with residents. Part of this is to manage expectations and allay concerns and fears.

The Council has developed a programme of work, in partnership with the Department of Justice, on 15 physical barriers in the City. The current process centres on what we have termed a "softening" of the barrier through small scale environmental works, addition of art-works, removal of items such as barbed wire, replacement of a steel gate with a see-through fence and other elements. It is deemed to be the case that a softening will build confidence and could lead to a further transformation of the barrier, possible adjustment of the barrier and may lead to ultimate removal.

There are huge resources required for this work as much of the physical works require an injection of capital moneys. In addition, there are significant barriers placed on this work by a lack of a joined up approach to the issue by statutory and Government agencies. Emergency powers legislation catered for the erection of barriers, but there is no equivalent in place to facilitate their removal.

A long term strategy is required with the appropriate resources and a comprehensive inter-agency approach. Legislation may also be required in order to speed up the process (planning permission, ownership, confidence building measures)

In addition, the issue of interface barriers has become one of equality. The poorest people within our City (from all communities) are those who live closest to interface barriers, where their life expectancy is 10 years less than people who do not live at an interface. The quality of life and health & well-being for such residents suffers as a result of their address where safety fears, lack of opportunity and poor health dominate their daily lives. All statutory and government interventions should seek to tackle these inequalities at interfaces, which can ultimately have a positive outcome on the removal of physical structures.

3. Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Tackling sectarianism and racism needs to be at the core of all public policy and programming. The goal of tackling sectarianism and racism should underpin capital projects, educational programmes, community initiatives and civic events. Such initiatives should seek to define how their project or programme will build better relationships between people from different political, racial and religious backgrounds.

Dedicated and adequate resources for programmes such as the District Council's Good Relations Programme need to be long term and sufficient to deliver real change within and between neighbourhoods. The recommendations within the recent NISRA evaluation

of the District Council's Good Relations programme need to be adopted by OFM/DFM and implemented into strategic policy and delivery.

The District Council's Good Relations programme can be the best tool under which to deliver effective intervention programmes that meet the needs and requirements of locally elected and accountable civic leaders. Grant aided programmes should be intercommunity (or single identity leading on to intercommunity engagement) and interactive in order to positively change attitudes and perceptions of the 'other'. Grant aid programmes should also seek to develop interactive engagement between minority ethnic communities and host communities. Some good examples of projects that engage on participation and inclusion of minority ethnic communities include the Council's Migrant Forum and the PEACE III funded "Creating Cohesive Communities" programme which seeks to undertake practical programmes to support inclusion and participation.

As part of the impending devolution of Community Planning powers to Council's, Good Relations needs to be at the heart of this process. A community plan that facilitates connectivity and mobility within and between neighbourhoods can succeed in connecting people across communities.

Civic leadership, from the top of Government down needs to be prominent, focussed and dedicated to the promotion of Good Relations and have an impact into all aspects of civic and social life.

Progress on interface barriers requires a need to place communities at the centre of this process. Validation and resources are required to the phased approach as set out in point 2 above.

In relation to making progress on interfaces and changes to physical structures, legislation may be required to force statutory agencies and Government Departments to speed up the delivery of any interface intervention.

Belfast Healthy Cities

Response to Office of the First and Deputy First Minister Evidence Hearing on Building a United Community

October 2014

Belfast Healthy Cities welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the evidence hearing on Building a United Community.

Belfast Healthy Cities is a partnership organisation working to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Belfast and beyond. The organisation acts as the link to the World Health Organization (WHO) European Healthy Cities Network on behalf of Belfast as a WHO Healthy City, and currently holds the WHO secretariat for the Network. Belfast Healthy Cities' key partners include Belfast City Council, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Bryson Group, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Public Health Agency, Queen's University Belfast and University of Ulster, as well as Departments including Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Department for Social Development and Department of the Environment.

The Healthy Cities approach focuses on bringing organisations and sectors together to consider how their work contributes to health and wellbeing; to share evidence and build capacity, and to introduce and pilot new concepts linked to core themes identified by the WHO European Healthy Cities Network. A core principle of the Healthy Cities movement is tackling inequalities in health and strengthening equity, and all Belfast Healthy Cities' work focuses on how equity can be strengthened, with a view to enabling people to take control of their own lives

As a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, which has a strong membership throughout Europe, Belfast Healthy Cities has access to both academic evidence and good practice on tackling disadvantage and inequalities in health.

Belfast Healthy Cities has previously responded to key OFMDFM consultations, including the Delivering Social Change for Children and Young People Strategy and the Active Ageing Strategy 2014-2020.

Belfast Healthy Cities would like to submit evidence on two aspects; the important role of communities in addressing health impacts and the including the views of children in building a united community. The inquiry is interested in how decision making in respect of building an strengthening communities and it is vitally important that all age groups are included.

Impacts of Violence and Unrest on Communities

The World Health Organization states that '[beyond deaths and injuries] violence has serious, life-long, and far-reaching consequences. These include mental health problems; job, school, and relationship difficulties; involvement in further violence as a victim or perpetrator; and the adoption of high-risk behaviours such as alcohol and substance misuse, smoking, and unsafe sex. Often years later, these can lead to cardio-vascular disease, cancer, sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS and other diseases.'[1]

[1] Global Status Update on Violence Flyer, WHO, 2014

Living in a state of unrest and in divided communities has well acknowledged and wide-ranging socio-economic influences on the lives of citizens. The built environment in areas that are physically divided tends to be of poorer quality and incomes tend to be lower and deprivation levels higher. The lower people are on the socio-economic gradient, the more vulnerable they are to the negative health impacts of environmental factors such as poor air quality, poor quality living environments and waste tipping that contribute to the gaps in healthy life expectancy between the richest and poorest areas.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot, in a review of social determinants and the health divide across Europe, makes a range of recommendations on how to address this divide at a community level including to 'ensure championing of partnership and cross sector working by local leaders' along with more extensive partnership working that uses local knowledge, resources and assets in communities[2]. Belfast Healthy Cities believes that these observations, which are based on extensive research throughout the WHO European region could form a basis for improved collaboration between decision makers and communities.

Belfast Healthy Cities currently provides the secretariat for the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, and would be pleased to support in identifying and sharing relevant evidence. This includes access to a database of case studies from cities across Europe, providing experience and learning from concrete interventions and approaches that could potentially be adapted for use at a local level. Through its role in supporting WHO Europe in facilitating the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, Belfast Healthy Cities has access to internationally leading expertise, including the Institute of Health Equity at University College London, which is led by Professor Sir Michael Marmot, cited above.

Belfast Healthy Cities believes that stable and resilient communities have a vitally important role in addressing these challenges. Communities are the core of our society, and play a key role for the wellbeing of people, at a physical, mental and social level. The environment within which communities exist sets the context for the opportunities and choices that are open and realistic to people, and as such shapes the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. Strong communities depend on supportive environments, which also play a role in tackling disadvantage.

Tackling disadvantage remains one of the 'wicked' issues, as it is a complex and multi-faceted problem. Belfast Healthy Cities believes that it is vital to build future work on a strong evidence base and understanding of the causal and event chains that affect disadvantage, and the solutions that tackle these.

Sharing evidence and capacity building are among the core roles of Belfast Healthy Cities, and Belfast Healthy Cities would be pleased to explore opportunities to share learning from WHO Europe on tackling disadvantage and building shared communities. Many approaches from across the European region would be complementary to initiatives already under way and adaptable to the process of strengthening communities in Northern Ireland. (See appendix 1)

As part of previous capacity building programmes, speakers have included Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Dr Erio Ziglio, then Head of the World Health Organization European Office for Investment for Health and Development, who contributed to the Committee for

[2] Review of social determinants and the health divide in the WHO European Region: final report UCL Institute of Health Equity 2013

Health, Social Services and Public Safety inquiry into health inequalities in 2012. As part of the organisation's 25th anniversary celebrations in 2013, we also welcomed Dr Agis Tsouros, WHO Europe Director of the Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being, which led to collaboration between DHSSPS and WHO Europe on the Making Life Better policy, which now reflects key themes of the WHO Europe public health strategy Health 2020.

Children in Communities

Belfast Healthy Cities has a particular interest the impact that the physical environment and communities have on the lives of children and their health. Our Child Friendly Places programme has involved children in assessing their own environments and making recommendations about how places can be improved and spaces used in a different way.

Programme1: Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children worked with 400 primary school age children across Belfast. Children participated in guided walks were they identified healthy and unhealthy aspects of the built environment in the areas surrounding their schools. While many children identified features associated with violence and sectarianism, including graffiti, vandalism and dereliction; there was also a clear sense of optimism. All the children identified positive aspects in their communities, most felt safe in their neighbourhoods and almost all mentioned the importance of feeling part of their community.

The culmination of the programme in 2014 was the development of Children's Voices- A Charter for Belfast, which collected a series of recommendations from the children on issues including open space, clean and safe environments and liveable communities. Belfast Healthy Cities believes that these recommendations should be used to inform the strategy.

Programme 2: KidsSpace has successfully transformed under used city centre space in accessible, family friendly venues that offer children and their families active, creative and free play activities. Since the first event at the newly constructed St Anne's Square in 2011, sessions have been held across streets in the city centre, in a community café and in an empty shop unit in CastleCourt shopping centre demonstrating that model is adaptable to location.

Both programmes have the aim of supporting children to be active and visible members of their communities. Belfast Healthy Cities believes that the strategy should reflect their views and aspirations as we move forward towards a united community.

Appendix 1

Evidence from WHO European Healthy Cities Network:

Udine, Italy: The healthy municipality of Udine has taken approach to developing community gardens similar that being undertaken in many areas of Northern Ireland at present. Their approach differs slightly in that they have developed the growing spaces as 'green plazas', public meeting spaces that are used as multifunctional spaces to bring members of the community together, increasing green space and providing functional venues for education, entertainment and recreation.

Over a number of years, Udine has also involved citizens in planning the built and environment and services in their communities, which is particularly relevant to Northern Ireland as increased public involvement in planning at a community level is introduced. Experiences of their approach, including the challenges could provide valuable learning for communities in Northern Ireland seeking to achieve similar goals.

Belfast Healthy Cities has collated case studies from previous WHO European Healthy Cities Annual Conferences (2010-2014) detailing examples of good practice under a range of WHO themes, including Health Equity in All Policies, Healthy Urban Environment and Caring and Support Environments, and would be happy to share further evidence to inform and support policy development.

Appendix 2

Reports from Belfast Healthy Cities
Children's Voices: A Charter for Belfast
Shaping Healthier Neighbourhoods for Children
KidsSpace- Exploring Child Friendly Space

Carnegie UK Trust

CarnegieUK TRUST

CHANGING MINDS • CHANGING LIVES

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2 September 2014

Dear Karen

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Carnegie United Kingdom (UK) Trust welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community. We have chosen only to respond to the terms of reference where we have experience and relevant evidence. Further information on our work is available on our website www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk.

Evidence base

The Carnegie UK Trust has been actively involved in promoting wellbeing measurement since the establishment of the first Carnegie Roundtable on Measuring What Matters in Scotland in 2010. The Trust's new discussion paper Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland: A new conversation for new times reports on the outcomes of the conference the Trust hosted in Autumn 2013 in Belfast on measuring economic performance and societal progress in Northern Ireland. To progress this work, we are now convening a Carnegie Roundtable on Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland with our Carnegie Associates at the School of Law at Queen's University Belfast, Dr Peter Doran and John Woods. The Roundtable will seek to raise awareness of the importance of measuring wellbeing and the positive impact that this has on policy development. It will also explore the next steps necessary to develop a wellbeing framework in Northern Ireland focused on achieving wellbeing outcomes. We are pleased to have the support of Finance Minister, Simon Hamilton MLA and the Assembly Finance Committee Chair, Daithí McKay MLA, for our work in Northern Ireland.

Honorary President: William Thomson CBE
Chair: Angus M Hogg
Chief Executive: Martyn Evans

Carnegie United Kingdom Trust
Incorporated by Royal Charter 1917
Scottish Charity No: SC 012799 operating in the UK and Ireland

To engage different groups in Northern Ireland with the Roundtable process, the idea of wellbeing and how it should be measured, focus groups were conducted with women, young people, ethnic minorities, and older people - groups which are traditionally under-represented in consultation exercises - and semi-structured interviews were held with sixteen key stakeholder groups. We have drawn on our own research and contributions from our conference attendees, Roundtable members, focus group participants and stakeholder interviews to inform our response.

The challenges to good relations

Exploring how the concept of wellbeing can be used to promote social change has a special urgency in Northern Ireland as communities emerge from generations of conflict. More than fifteen years after the Good Friday Agreement, some of the most enduring post-conflict challenges are, we believe, at their heart, questions of wellbeing.

This appears to have been confirmed by our focus group participants who, despite a range of backgrounds, identified three common challenges to their subjective wellbeing:

- **Social isolation or loneliness.** Participants across the focus groups spoke of the general breakdown of communication across society, a lack of family support or traditional family relationships, a lack of peer support or friendships or physical isolation.

- **Mental ill-health.** Mental ill-heath and the stigma surrounding it were identified by each focus group as a key challenge. At the first meeting of the Roundtable, the close correlation between Troubles-related trauma and suicide was recognised, along with the fact that there is limited understanding of this correlation, and little meaningful action on issues such as addiction and depression. It was raised that there have been nearly as many suicides in Northern Ireland since 1998 as there were deaths during the Troubles. Therefore, any strategy to improve good relations and societal wellbeing must acknowledge that many of the barriers to progress are rooted in the experiences of people during the Troubles.

- **Fear.** Representatives from ethic minority communities, older people and women in particular highlighted fears for personal safety as a significant challenge to wellbeing. Fear for the future in terms of uncertainty over job and economic prospects and quality of life generally, particularly in the continuing period of austerity, was also a challenge common to all the focus groups.

Overall, the challenge for wellbeing and good relations in Northern Ireland is to address multi-generational deprivation, which cannot be addressed by project scale interventions; this requires systemic change.

How division can be addressed

The above challenges to good relations undermine the wellbeing of citizens and a united future in Northern Ireland with a strong sense of common purpose. In such challenging times, it is important for the Northern Ireland Executive to design policies in way that improves the personal circumstances of citizens, and also builds community resilience, economic activity and political stability.

Below we have outlined four ways in which the concept of wellbeing can help to address division in Northern Ireland:

- **Focus for government.** In our Roundtable meetings, focus groups and stakeholder interviews, there was overwhelming support for the idea of wellbeing as a useful and important focus for the Northern Ireland Executive, local government and partners. A focus on wellbeing was seen as having a potentially important impact on inequality and poverty, providing a unifying vision across government, and a shift away from an overriding focus on economics. Our participants believed that the vision for government is currently limited to a general aspiration to improve the economy, and that a focus on wellbeing would provide a more holistic and inclusive agenda and approach to policymaking. Leadership from the Northern Ireland Executive is critical for the wellbeing agenda to prosper and to be embraced across the public sector.

- **A shared narrative.** As with a vision for government, our participants also believed there to be a limited shared narrative across government, focusing only on the economy and job creation. The prospect of a shared narrative across government based on improving the wellbeing of people in Northern Ireland was universally welcomed. This was based on the premise that a focus on wellbeing could enable people to have discussions which they may not otherwise have, such as the human and economic costs of division, and shift the focus away from the zero-sum game of resources between communities. The concept of wellbeing is therefore a useful tool to address a number of legacy issues such as low educational attainment and health inequalities, and for cross-community work. A shared narrative based on wellbeing has the potential to help the Northern Ireland Executive get beyond the concept of a divided community to one that embraces diversity and includes a politics that re-engages groups which are currently alienated, such as women and young people. An early indication of support for a shared political narrative based on wellbeing was provided by Finance Minister, Simon Hamilton MLA and the Assembly Finance Committee Chair, Daithí McKay MLA, at our conference in Belfast last autumn.

- **Political institutions.** Our participants were of the view that a shared narrative on wellbeing could, in turn, help to form a coherent Programme for Government which would achieve joined up working across government departments and the public sector. There are significant opportunities to embed the wellbeing agenda across the Northern Ireland administration in the context of a range of on-going government initiatives, including the creation of a Public Sector Reform Division within the Department of Finance and Personnel, in the development of the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister's Delivering Social Change framework and within the Northern Ireland Executive's core commitment to equality, good relations and prosperity. An outcomes-based performance framework based on improving wellbeing was welcomed by our participants, if the outcomes set by government were meaningful and realistic. Such a framework could provide transparency and a tool for scrutiny for the Northern Ireland Assembly, the media and the general public on progress being made towards achieving wellbeing outcomes, facilitate working across government departments and the public sector and lead to more efficient resource allocation.

- **Public engagement.** A new national conversation with the public and the voluntary sector about what matters in Northern Ireland across all communities would help to inform a wellbeing framework focusing on achieving wellbeing outcomes. Embedding public engagement for setting outcomes into the reform of community planning and building on existing good practice in a number of councils could help secure meaningful engagement with a wellbeing performance framework. Communities could also be empowered to help measure wellbeing through the network of clubs, groups and forums in Northern Ireland and their significant reach into communities.

We hope that you find these comments helpful. If you would like to discuss our response, or would like to find out more about our work please contact my colleague Lauren Pennycook, Policy Officer at laurenp@carnegieuk.org or by telephone 01383 721 445. We would also be pleased to provide oral evidence to the Committee on this inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

Martyn Evans
Chief Executive

Children's Law Centre



Written Evidence to the Committee for the First and Deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building A United Community

1. The Children's Law Centre

1.1 The Children's Law Centre (CLC) is an independent charitable organisation established in September 1997, which works towards a society where all children can participate, are valued, have their rights respected and guaranteed without discrimination and where every child can achieve their full potential.

1.2 CLC undertakes education, training and research on children's rights, produces information on a wide range of children's rights topics and makes submissions on law, policy and practice affecting children and young people. We have a dedicated free phone legal advice line for children and young people and their parents and carers, known as CHALKY, through which we offer free legal advice and information on a wide range of children's legal rights issues. CLC also has a youth advisory group called youth@clc that act as peer advocates and inform our work.
CLC provides free legal representation in strategic cases. We represent at the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal, School Admission and Expulsion Appeals Tribunals and the Mental Health Review Tribunal. We also provide legal representation in a limited number of strategic cases via judicial review and have experience of submitting written and making oral interventions as a Third Party to proceedings in a small number of cases with a particular focus on children's rights.

Within our policy, legal, advice and representation services we deal with a range of issues in relation to children and the law, including the law with regard to some of our most vulnerable children and young people, such as looked after children, children who come into conflict with the law, children with special educational needs, children living in poverty, children with disabilities, children with mental health problems and children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, including Traveller children.

1.3 Our organisation is founded on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular:

- Children shall not be discriminated against and shall have equal access to protection.
- All decisions taken which affect children's lives should be taken in the child's best interests.
- Children have the right to have their voices heard in all matters concerning them.

1.4 The human rights standards contained in the UNCRC should be reflected in all laws and policies emanating from the Northern Ireland Assembly as one of the devolved regions of the UK Government. The UK Government as a signatory to the UNCRC is obliged to deliver all of the rights contained within the Convention for children and young people. From its perspective as an organisation which works with and on behalf of some of our most vulnerable and socially excluded children and young people, both directly and indirectly, CLC is grateful for the opportunity to provide evidence on the Inquiry into Building A United Community. CLC has been extremely supportive of and worked extensively on the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations since the introduction of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 as we believe that both duties have the potential to make a meaningful difference to the lives of children and young people across Northern Ireland.

2. International Children's Rights and Human Rights Standards

2.1 CLC believes that the Inquiry into Building a United Community must be conducted within the framework of international children and human rights standards, in particular the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as incorporated into domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998 and the UNCRC. We would also submit that in carrying out the Inquiry the Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister should also take into account all of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's[1] Concluding Observations made following examinations of the United Kingdom's compliance with the UNCRC and relevant General Comments issued by the Committee to assist in interpreting the obligations under the UNCRC.

2.2 Through the ratification of the UNCRC the Government has committed to giving effect to a set of non-negotiable and legally binding minimum standards and obligations in respect of all aspects of children's lives. Government has also committed to the implementation of the Convention by ensuring that United Kingdom (and that of the devolved administrations) law, policy and practice relating to children is in conformity with UNCRC standards. The UK Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights in its report[2] on the UNCRC described the obligations the UNCRC places on Government as follows:

"The Convention should function as the source of a set of child-centred considerations to be used as yardsticks by all departments of Government when evaluating legislation and in policy-making… We recommend, particularly in relation to policy-making, that Government demonstrate more conspicuously a recognition of its obligation to implement the rights under the Convention."[3]

2.3 All children and young people under 18 are entitled to enjoy the protection of all rights afforded by the UNCRC. At its core the Inquiry into Building a United Community must ensure that primary consideration is given to the best interests of the child (article 3), in a manner which is non-discriminatory (article 2) and which

[1] The independent body that monitors implementation of the UNCRC by its States parties.
[2] Joint Committee on Human Rights 'The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child' Tenth Report of Session 2002 – 03, HL Paper 117, HC 81.
[3] *Ibid*, para 25.

respects and takes into account the views of the child (article 12), protecting the child's inherent right to life, survival and development to the maximum extent possible (article 6). In addition to these principles of the Convention, other Convention articles relevant to the Inquiry include the child's rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 14), freedom of association and peaceful assembly (article 15), privacy and family life (article 16), protection from abuse and neglect (article 19), play and leisure (article 31) and protection from torture and deprivation of liberty (article 37).

2.4 The ECHR as incorporated by the Human Rights Act 1998 must guide the Committee in carrying out its Inquiry into Building a United Community. Relevant to the Inquiry are the right to life (article 2), the right to freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment (article 3), the right to liberty and security (article 5), the right to respect for private and family life (article 8), the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 9), freedom of assembly and association (article11) and the right to protection from discrimination in conjunction with any of the other Convention rights (article 14).

2.5 The Committee on the Rights of the Child in its most recent examination of the UK Government's compliance with its obligations under the UNCRC[4] highlighted its concerns about inequality in a number of areas in its Concluding Observations[5] and called on the UK Government and its devolved administrations to address inequalities in children's lives across a range of areas including poverty, standard of living, education and health. The Committee also called on the Government to take action to address discrimination faced by children and young people and to introduce penal sanctions to address discrimination faced by children and young people if necessary. It also called on the Government to promote, facilitate and implement, in legislation as well as in practice, within a range of settings, including communities, the principle of respect for the views of the child and called on the Government to collaborate with civil society organisations to increase opportunities for children's meaningful participation.

3. Building a United Community – Good Relations

3.1 CLC is very supportive of the vision outlined in the Together: Building a United Community Strategy,

"a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance."

It is our view that the creation of a united community with equality of opportunity, good relations and reconciliation at its core is critical. We have a number of concerns

[4] 23rd and 24th September 2008
[5] 3rd October 2008, CRC/C/GBR/CO/4

however that the importance of 'equality of opportunity' is not adequately reflected in the Terms of Reference of this Inquiry.

3.2 CLC is one of the lead organisations working on the full and proper implementation of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the legislative embodiment of the relevant provisions of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. We are firmly committed to the full implementation of and effective operation of the section 75 and have worked towards this since the implementation of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. We believe that the importance of section 75 cannot be over emphasised and it is vital to acknowledge the high constitutional importance of section 75 in the context of the new settlement in Northern Ireland. Children and young people are the most vulnerable group in our society and they are not a homogenous group. Most will fall into a number of the section 75 categories as children and young people have multiple identities which should afford them extra protection under section 75. CLC has evidence that the effective operation of section 75 has the potential to deliver extremely positive outcomes for children and young people, however it is our experience that the potential of section 75 has not been realised to date and while there has been some success with regard to compliance with section 75, on the whole section 75 has not delivered to the maximum extent possible for children and young people in Northern Ireland. We would welcome a greater emphasis on and more progress being made in the proper discharge of and consequent realisation of the obligations under section 75 to improve the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

3.3 The Committee will be aware that section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 places two distinct but inter-related duties on designated public authorities in Northern Ireland. The first of these duties is detailed in Section 75(1) and is known as the 'equality duty'. This duty places a positive obligation on designated public authorities in Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally, between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without. **Critically it entails more than the elimination of discrimination and requires designated public authorities in Northern Ireland to take proactive action to promote equality of opportunity between members of the 9 section 75 categories identified in section 75(1). It also encourages public authorities in Northern Ireland to take action to address inequality among members of the 9 specified groups where inequality has been identified.**

3.4 The second duty is the 'good relations' duty and this can be found in section 75(2) of the NI Act 1998. Section 75(2) places an obligation on public authorities to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. Guidance on this duty is clear that it extends beyond the religious / political dimension of 'community relations' and that compliance with the good relations duty requires consideration of the needs and interests of all minority ethnic groups.

3.5 One important point to note is the difference between the weight to be given by public authorities with regard to the duties under section 75(1) and (2). Section 75(1) talks

about the obligation on public authorities to have *due* regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between members of each of the nine section 75 categories and the good relations duty in section 75(2) refers to the need to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The term 'due regard' was intended by parliament, after significant parliamentary scrutiny to be and is stronger than 'regard', meaning that it is the legislative intention that the equality duty is the stronger of the two duties and places a greater obligation on designated public authorities. This weighting in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 is reflective of the provisions of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and the development of the earlier non-statutory Policy Appraisal and Fair Treatment (PAFT) Guidelines.

3.6 Even though one duty is stronger than the other both duties always apply. Where there is a perceived tension between the two duties, both duties need to be discharged in all circumstances. What the greater strength of the equality duty means in law and practice is that the discharge of the good relations duty cannot be an alternative to or set aside the equality of opportunity duty.

3.7 While CLC is very supportive of an increased emphasis on good relations with a view to the move towards a more peaceful, inclusive and shared society for our children and young people, it is CLC's experience that the good relations duty has on a number of occasions been misused and misinterpreted by designated public bodies and in so doing they have undermined and fail to give effect to the equality duty under section 75, i.e. the emphasis was on equal treatment rather than equality of opportunity. With regard to this Committee Inquiry and its focus on seeking views on good relations and what good relations means it is vital in developing a definition of good relations that the will and intention of Parliament in drafting section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the provisions of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement are upheld with primacy being afforded to the equality duty.

3.8 The concept of good relations was first introduced in law in Northern Ireland by a rarely used provision under Article 67 of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 which places a statutory duty on councils to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between different racial groups. This was followed by the introduction of the good relations duty under section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Further examination of good relations was contained within OFMDFM's *"A Shared Future,"*[6] document and the Northern Ireland Executive's, *"Together: Building a United Community,"* strategy (TBUC)[7].

3.9 TBUC proposes to represent a major change in the way that good relations will be delivered across government. It also proposes, rightly in CLC's view, that the promotion of equality of opportunity is an essential element in the building of good community relations and considers that good relations cannot and should not be built on a foundation of inequality[8]. TBUC states that,

[6] 2005
[7] May 2013
[8] *Ibid,* para 1.17

"…all of our policy making and legislative actions must take into account the Section 75 duties in their entirety. Whilst the main focus of this document is on improving community relations, we cannot look at these issues in isolation. To tackle issues of inequality we must improve equality of opportunity; by improving equality of opportunity for all, we make positive strides to address better community relations. Likewise, by tackling sectarianism, prejudice and hate we can contribute positively to removing and reducing the motivation for discrimination. Therefore, in our decision making and policy implementation, we regard the promotion of equality of opportunity as an essential element in the building of good community relations and consider that good relations cannot and should not be built on a foundation of inequality."[9]

3.10 CLC is very supportive of this analysis of the relationship between good relations and equality of opportunity and believes that the full and proper implementation of section 75(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 is key to progressing good relations in Northern Ireland and ensuring the promotion of equality of opportunity and addressing sectarianism and division.

3.11 CLC is supportive of the need for a definition of good relations as we believe that clarity of law and measurement of success can only be achieved through the adoption of a clear and understandable definition of what is meant by good relations. We believe that the development of an agreed definition of good relations should be done through widespread consultation with stakeholders, including children and young people and their advocates to obtain the views of children and young people living with division and inequality. Central to compliance with the statutory duties imposed under section 75 is the concept of increased participation in policy making and development through public consultation. There is an obligation on public authorities to carry out public consultation on the impact of policies and on matters to which the section 75 statutory duties are likely to be relevant. This would clearly apply to the establishment of a definition of good relations.

3.12 The intention of the equality duty under section 75 is to encourage public authorities to address inequalities and demonstrate measurable positive impact on the lives of people experiencing inequalities. Its effective implementation should improve the quality of life for all of the people of Northern Ireland. It is clear that a great deal of work remains with regard to ensuring equality of opportunity for all in Northern Ireland. There is widespread acknowledgement that inequalities exist across all areas of children's lives including income levels, standard of living, access to health care and health outcomes, educational attainment levels, lifetime opportunities etc. The equality duty under section 75 aims to mainstream equality of opportunity among members of the nine groups detailed in the legislation through changing the practices of Government and public authorities so that equality is central to policy making, policy implementation and service delivery. Such an approach can addresses inequalities which exist but it requires positive action to give all children the opportunity to develop to their maximum potential and to break the cycle of disadvantage and inequality faced by many vulnerable groups in society. It is therefore fundamental that the primacy of the equality duty under section 75 is respected in developing a definition of good relations.

[9] *Ibid*

3.13 The Equality Commission's Guidance, *"Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 A Guide for Public Authorities"*[10] is clear that the Section 75 statutory duties require more than the avoidance of discrimination. The Guidance states that public authorities should actively seek ways to encourage greater equality of opportunity and good relations through their policy development. It also provides that public authorities should give particular consideration to positive action where the impact of a policy will affect different people in a different way recognising that certain groups may experience greater inequalities[11].

3.14 It is also CLC's view that if section 75 was fully implemented by designated public authorities, both with regard to the equality and good relations duties, outcomes for children and for society more generally would be significantly improved with regard to tolerance and integration through meaningfully addressing the inequalities which exist in society and impact so negatively on children's lives and life chances in Northern Ireland.

3.15 CLC has number of concerns about the implementation of section 75 to date which we believe must be addressed in taking forward work on good relations and giving effect to both the equality of opportunity and good relations duties. Underpinning all concerns on the effective operation of section 75 is the lack of a sufficient enforcement mechanism and sanctions which we believe must be addressed in examining good relations and enhancing policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making as per the Terms of Reference of this Inquiry. Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 details the procedures to follow when there is a perceived breach of a public body's section 75 duties. Complaints can be made to the Equality Commission by a person who claims to have been directly affected[12] by the failure of a public authority to comply with its equality scheme[13] or the Equality Commission can carry out an investigation into a public authority's compliance without having received a complaint[14].

3.16 As stated above, there are extremely limited sanctions in terms of the outcome of an investigation. In the case of Northern Ireland public bodies, the Equality Commission is required to compile a report with recommendations for action by the public authority if deemed necessary. If the Commission considers the action recommended has not been taken within a reasonable time, the Commission may refer the matter to the Secretary of State who may give directions to the public authority[15]. If the public authority is a Government Department, the Secretary of State does not have the power to issue directions but the Commission has discretion to lay the report before Parliament[16]as was the case with the Commission's report on its investigation of a complaint by the Children's Law Centre of a failure by the Northern Ireland Office

[10] April 2010
[11] *Ibid,* pages 8 and 9
[12] Schedule 9, para 10 Northern Ireland Act 1998
[13] A document approved by the Equality Commission which outlines a public authority's arrangements for complying with its section 75 obligations.
[14] *Op cit.* 12
[15] *Op cit.* 12, para 11(2)-(5)
[16] *Op cit.*12, para 12(5)

(NIO) to comply with its Equality Scheme. Despite the Equality Commission's recommendation that the NIO carry out an Equality Impact Assessment[17] on that occasion, the Secretary of State's Ministerial Statement stated that, *"…an Equality Impact Assessment was not necessary."*[18] There is the possibility of legal redress in relation to a breach of section 75.In the Court of Appeal Judgement[19] in the Re Neill Application for judicial review the court ruled that,

"The conclusion that the exclusive remedy available to deal with the complained of failure of NIO to comply with its equality scheme does not mean that judicial review will in all instances be unavailable. We have not decided that the existence of the Schedule 9 procedure ousts the jurisdiction of the court in all instances of breach of section 75... Judicial review should therefore be available to deal with substantive breaches of the section. ."[20]

However it is unclear what type of breach will be considered a substantive breach of section 75.[21].

3.17 CLC believes that an effective enforcement mechanism is critical in ensuring the realisation of the full potential of equality of opportunity and good relations. We believe lessons must be learned in the course of this Inquiry from the failure of section 75 of deliver as it was intended. A central element to this is ensuring the enforcement of compliance with equality of opportunity and good relations as the foundation for good relations.

4 Building a United Community – How communities are involved in decision making

4.1 We are very supportive of the Committee for OFMDFM examining how communities are involved in decision making as part of this Inquiry. It is CLC's experience that the involvement of children and young people in decision making is piecemeal at best. CLC has continually raised the lack of involvement of children and young people in policy making including in their communities as an issue across all aspects of children's lives with various Government Departments and agencies. It is CLC's view that the exclusion of children and young people from decision making in their communities on issues which impact on their lives leads to adult based solutions to community wide issues.

4.2 CLC would submit that Article 12 of the UNCRC is particularly relevant to any discussion around how children and young people are involved in policy and decision making including within their communities . Article 12 of the UNCRC provides that,

[17] The mechanism where proposed and existing policies are assessed to determine their impact on members of the nine categories under section 75
[18] Peter Hain's Ministerial Statement on Equality Commission Report on ASBOs 16th March 2006
[19] Re Neill Application for judicial review [2006] NICA 5
[20] *Ibid*, para 30
[21] *Ibid*

"*States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.*"

Article 12 as one of the general principles of the UNCRC, establishes not only a fundamental right in itself, but should also be considered in the interpretation and implementation of all other rights contained within the UNCRC.[22]

4.3 The Committee on the Rights of the Child has issued General Comment No. 12 on the right of the child to be heard in order to assist States in the effective implementation of Article 12. This identifies that the views expressed by children may add relevant perspectives and experience and should be considered in decision-making, policymaking and the preparation of laws.[23] The Committee also emphasises that Article 12 requires not only the participation of individual children and clearly defined groups of children, but the participation of groups of children, such as indigenous children, children with disabilities, or children in general, who are affected directly or indirectly by social, economic or cultural conditions of living in their society.[24]

In highlighting the link between Article 12 and Article 2 of the UNCRC, the Committee on the Rights of the Child notes that Article 2 provides that every child has the right not to be discriminated against in the exercise of his or her rights, including those provided under Article 12. States are required to address discrimination, including against vulnerable or marginalised groups of children, to ensure that children are assured their right to be heard and are enabled to participate in all matters affecting them on an equal basis with all other children.[25]

4.4 The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child notes within the General Comment that much of the opportunity for children's participation takes place at the community level. The Committee welcomes the growing number of local youth parliaments, municipal children's councils and *ad hoc* consultations where children can voice their views in decision making processes, but highlights that these structures for formal representative participation in local government should be just one of many approaches to the implementation of Article 12 at the local level, as they only allow for a relatively small number of children to engage in their local communities.[26] The Committee urges States parties to avoid tokenistic approaches, which limit children's expression of views, or which allow children to be heard, but fail to give their views due weight. It emphasises that if participation is to be effective and meaningful, it needs to be understood as a process, not as an individual one-off event.[27]

[22] United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 12 (2009) 'The right of the child to be heard', CRC/C/GC/12, 20th July 2009, para.2.
[23] *Ibid*, para.12.
[24] *Ibid*, para.87.
[25] *Ibid*, para.75.
[26] *Ibid*, para.127.
[27] *Ibid*, para.132 – 133.

4.5 In addition, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, in its 2008 Concluding Observations, following the most recent examination of the United Kingdom Government's compliance with the UNCRC recommended that the United Kingdom, in accordance with Article 12 of the Convention, should promote, facilitate and implement, in legislation as well as in practice, within the family, schools, and the community as well as in institutions and in administrative and judicial proceedings, the principle of respect for the views of the child. The Committee further recommended support for forums for children's participation.[28]

4.6 It is clear from the UNCRC and the associated recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child that the participation of children and young people in decision making including within their communities is vital. CLC is concerned that currently children and young people's voices are not sufficiently heard in policy and decision making including within their communities. We recommend that formal mechanisms be introduced to ensure sufficient inclusion of children and young people within decision making structures in communities in line with the obligations under Article 12 of the UNCRC.

4.7 The meaningful involvement of children and young people in community decision making is vital when one considers that it is well acknowledged that children and young people are disproportionately viewed as being involved in crime and anti-social behaviour[29]. The Northern Ireland Policing Board's (NIPB) Children and Young People's Thematic Review[30] noted that children and young people are subjected to inaccurate and unfair stereotyping and that rather than being subjected to this, children and young people must be protected and respected.[31] The Review considered issues around anti-social behaviour out of a desire not to suggest that children and young people are the protagonists of such behaviour, but rather because they are often *perceived* to be the protagonists, a myth the Review wished to dispel.[32] The Review highlighted that in communities built upon mutual empathy and respect, there was a reduction in the perception of anti-social behaviour. The negative stereotyping of children and young people fed perceptions of anti-social behaviour, and this almost certainly resulted in increased numbers of reports to the police and an increased focus by the police in response.[33] This diminished the ability of the police to concentrate on policing actual criminal activity. CLC believes that the meaningful involvement of children and young people in decision making including in their communities is vital given the fundamental importance of the involvement of young people in the issues of policing and community safety and the need for their voices to be heard in developing inclusive and effective solutions.

[28] United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations United Kingdom, CRC/C/GBR/CO/4, 20th October 2008, para.33(a) and (b).
[29] 'Hoodies or altar boys? What is media stereotyping doing to our British boys?' Women in Journalism, March 2009.
[30] January 2011
[31] 'Human Rights Thematic Review – Children and Young People' Northern Ireland Policing Board, January 2011, p.3.
[32] *Ibid*, p.14.
[33] *Ibid*, p.15.

5 Building a United Community – Addressing sectarianism and division

5.1 CLC is supportive of the emphasis in this Inquiry on what good relations means in practice, on bringing divided communities together and on addressing intolerance and issues to encourage community integration. We believe that in attempting to address community division and intolerance, solutions must be long term, sustainable and in the best interests of the entire community. CLC does not believe that such solutions can be arrived at without a comprehensive examination of the legacy of the conflict and the particular circumstances which exist in Northern Ireland as a result of the conflict including its impact on children's lives on a daily basis.

5.2 The complexity of the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict and its associated issues, which impact on the lives of our children and young people who are growing up in post conflict Northern Ireland, require significant interrogation. CLC believes that the legacy of the Northern Ireland conflict is very pervasive today in the lives of our children and young people. We examine below some of the issues faced by children and young people in Northern Ireland as a consequence of the conflict, which we believe need to be addressed in ensuring long term solutions and a settlement which will guarantee a more secure future for the children and young people of Northern Ireland.

5.3 The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister[34] records that 36% of those killed in the conflict in Northern Ireland were children and young people. Goretti Horgan and Marina Monteith[35] found that children and young people living in areas of deprivation continue to experience social exclusion and conflict related violence. They note growing evidence that children are suffering mental ill health as a result of inter-generational trauma. Meanwhile, Government acknowledges the inadequate provision of child and adolescent mental health services[36] and indeed CLC has determined that investment in child and adolescent mental health services is extremely inadequate to meet the growing need.

5.4 There are no complete figures for children injured as a result of the conflict. Between 1991 and 1997, 120 young people were shot (usually in the kneecaps) and 234 assaulted by paramilitaries. All of these young people come from the most disadvantaged communities[37]. While there had been a steady decline in shootings and assaults by non-state forces in Northern Ireland since 2000/01, according to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) statistics, there was a sharp increase of around 125% in the number of non-state force style shootings (from 20 to 46) and a near 100% increase in the number of non-state force style assaults between 2008/09 and 2009/10 (from 41 to 81).[38] Unfortunately these PSNI statistics are not collated by age, therefore we do not know how many of these attacks were targeted at children or young people. Further PSNI statistics show that whilst the number of non-state

[34] 2006
[35] 2009
[36] 2006
[37] "*The Impact of Political Conflict on Children in Northern Ireland"* Smyth et al 2004
[38] 'Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics: Annual Report covering the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012', Police Service of Northern Ireland, p. 5.

force style assaults and shootings has since decreased, from 1st April 2010 until 31st March 2012, there were still 66 non-state style shootings in total.[39] Over the same period there were 96 non-state style assaults in total.[40] It should be noted that these statistics only include those incidents that are brought to the attention of police and some incidents may not have been reported.

5.5 In Northern Ireland it is vital that there is adequate acknowledgement of the impacts of the conflict and its legacy. Many of the children whose past trauma went unrecognised and untreated now have families of their own. Trans-generational trauma manifests itself in a variety of ways,

"...it's affecting children's education, their mental health and their ability to participate in society."[41]

5.6 Children and young people today, *"...are more likely to experience small-scale, sporadic acts of political violence rather than large-scale, widespread violent confrontation"*[42].While many will have no direct experience of violence, some do. It has been argued that reflecting the historical, political and social contexts in Northern Ireland, activities involving violence in a post Good Friday Agreement society are generally connected to segregated living and sectarianism.[43] Those living in 'interface' areas, in particular, are likely to witness or engage in occasional, opportunist acts of violence targeted at members of the 'other' community.[44] It has been argued that the exceptional levels of violence experienced by children during the conflict have led to a high tolerance and 'normalisation' of violence as a primary means of settling disputes, demonstrating opposition or drawing attention to perceived injustices.[45]

5.7 Research conducted over three years with 196 children and young people across six communities heavily affected by the conflict, with the aim of understanding and exploring the lives of children living in those communities, found that, "*violence has remained a part of everyday life for children and young people living in communities defined by uncertainty, unease and the continued presence of paramilitaries or dissidents*".[46] Many of the young people interviewed reported being exposed to

[39] 'Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics: Annual Report covering the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012' Police Service of Northern Ireland, 10th May 2012, p. 2. 'Police Recorded Security Situation Statistics 2010/11 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011', Police Service of Northern Ireland, 12th May 2011, p. 3.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid*, p. 244
[42] Leonard, M. (2007) '*Trapped in Space? Children's Accounts of Risky Environments'* Children and Society, Vol. 21, pp. 432-445, p. 433
[43] Roche, R. (2008) *Sectarianisms and Segregation in Urban Northern Ireland: Northern Irish Youth Post-Agreement. A Report on the Facts, Fears and Feelings Project*, Belfast: Queens University Belfast, p136-147
[44] Hansson, U. (2005) *Troubled Youth? Young People, Violence and Disorder in Northern Ireland,* Belfast*:* Institute for Conflict Research, pp. 18-30
[45] Horgan, G. (2005) *'Why the Bill of Rights should protect and promote the rights of children and young people in Northern Ireland. The particular circumstances of children in Northern Ireland'* in Horgan, G. and Kilkelly, U. (eds) *Protecting children and young people's rights in the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. Why? How?*, Belfast: Save the Children and Children's Law Centre, p. 13
[46] McAlister, S., Scraton, P. And Haydon, D. (2009) *Childhood in Transition Experiencing Marginalisation and Conflict in Northern Ireland* QUB, Save the Children, The Prince's Trust. p. 152.

sectarian violence, community violence, rioting against the police and paramilitary style threats and punishments.

5.8 Northern Ireland continues to be a highly segregated society. Segregation in housing, education, public services and leisure facilities continues to be the daily reality experienced by most children and young people. Over 90% of public housing continues to be segregated along religious lines.[47] In Belfast, 98% of public housing is segregated into Protestant or Catholic areas[48]. McAllister et al[49] found segregation to be a defining characteristic of children and young people's lives, *"every aspect of the lives of children and young people was defined by division-their identities, communities, schools, social networks, sporting activities and use of free-time*".[50] Children learn the language of division from about 2 years of age and are then educated mainly in separate schools. Friendships in adult life are mainly in-group as are some 90% of marriages.[51]

5.9 Given the "conflict profile" of children in Northern Ireland CLC believes that it is essential that there is increased investment in child and youth focused services in the communities most impacted upon by the conflict.

5.10 It has been well recognised that factors associated with the conflict and with a society emerging from conflict have impacted severely on child and adolescent mental health in Northern Ireland.[52] The Chief Medical Officer estimated that more than 20% of young people in Northern Ireland are suffering "*significant mental health problems*" by their 18th birthday.[53] Yet there has been a gross failure to recognise and respond to the long term consequences of trans-generational trauma. McAlister et al[54] have noted that,

> "…*the inter-relationship of unaddressed conflict-related trauma, interpersonal violence within families, continuing paramilitary intimidation, forced exiling, economic marginalisation and social exclusion constitute 'special circumstances' for children, young people and their families in Northern Ireland*".[55]

There has been an associated failure to adequately resource appropriate mental health services.[56] In Northern Ireland in 2012/13, only £19m has been allocated to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, which equates to 7.9% of the total

[47] *Mixed housing scheme is launched*, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, 30 October 2006.
[48] Constructions of Social Exclusion Among Young People From Interface Areas of Northern Ireland Owen Hargie, Aodheen O'Donnell, and Christel McMullan, Youth Society, 2011
[49] 2009
[50] *Op cit* 46 p 151.
[51] *Op cit* 48
[52] DHSSPS (2005) *A Vision for a Comprehensive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service – The Bamford Review* November pp 15-16
[53] Chief Medical Officer (1999) Health of the Public in Northern Ireland: report of the Chief Medical Officer, 1999: *Taking care of the next generation* Belfast DHSSPS.
[54] 2009
[55] *Op cit* 46 p 25
[56] O' Rawe, A. (2003) *An Overview of Northern Ireland Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services* Belfast: Children's Law Centre.

mental health expenditure for that period[57], despite the fact that children and young people under 18 represent nearly a quarter of Northern Ireland's population.

5.11 Children living in areas most impacted upon by the conflict are more likely to have mental health needs. Evidence that experience of the Northern Ireland conflict is associated with poorer mental health is strong[58]. Population-based surveys show that those who experienced most violence have significantly higher rates of depression than those with little or no experience. People whose areas had been heavily affected by violence had very high rates of depression[59]. Children have been injured, killed, subject to punishment beatings, bereaved and have witnessed terrible violence.[60] Many children remain undiagnosed and services are patchy and geographically uneven.

5.12 There is an extremely worrying and rising suicide rate, particularly in relation to under 18's, in the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland which are also the areas to have suffered worst as a result of the Northern Ireland conflict. North and West Belfast has a population of around 150,000 living in some of the most socially and economically disadvantaged wards in Northern Ireland. The area has a large youth population and the impact of the conflict in these areas has been widespread. Research shows a higher rate of mental illness in the North and West Belfast Trust area than elsewhere in Northern Ireland. The average rate of suicide in Northern Ireland is 9.8 per 100,000. In North and West Belfast the rate is much higher with an average approaching 18 per 100,000[61].

5.13 The Guardian newspaper reported in March 2011[62] that suicide rates have been rising markedly in Northern Ireland over the past decade. According to the Public Health Agency (PHA), after a period of relatively static figures in the latter half of the last century, between 1999 and 2008 rates of suicide in Northern Ireland increased by 64%. Most of the rise was attributable to young men in the 15 to 34 age group. A large proportion was concentrated in disadvantaged areas and, in particular, north and west Belfast, the area most impacted upon by the conflict. In 2002, 76% of all suicides in Northern Ireland were male, and 60% were between 15 and 34 years old. By 2008, the latest year for which a reliable breakdown of the statistics is available, 77% of suicides were male, but the proportion aged between 15 and 34 had risen to 72%. This marked increase in the number of suicides in Northern Ireland is at a time when rates in Britain have remained relatively static.

5.14 Reasons given for this rise include the long term impact of entrenched deprivation in some communities when coupled with issues of identity in a "post-conflict" society and the legacy of the Troubles for some of the younger generation of men and boys.

[57] Freedom of Information Request from the Health and Social Care Board, dated 8th April 2013
[58] Miller *et al.,* 2003; O'Reilly and Stevenson, 2003; Muldoon *et al*., 2005
[59] Suicide and Young People: the case of Northern Ireland - Mike Tomlinson School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work Queen's University Belfast 4th October 2007
[60] Geraghty, T. 'Getting It Rights?' Children's Law Centre and Save the Children 1999. pp 53-54 and Smyth, M. 'Half the Battle: Understanding the Impact of the Troubles/Conflict on Children and Young People in Northern Ireland' INCORE. 1998.
[61] June 2006
[62] http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/mar/16/suicide-rates-northern-ireland

5.15 Consultant psychiatrist Dr. Philip McGarry contends that there are a number of important aspects of suicide to be considered in the Northern Ireland context, including the legacy of the Troubles. When discussing the fact that suicide rates in Northern Ireland have risen since the Good Friday agreement was signed, Dr. McGarry told The Guardian,

"That paramilitary violence remained a feature of working-class communities such as west and north Belfast "long after" the agreement was signed, and that so many young men in those areas have mental health problems as a result, he says, is no coincidence[63]."

5.16 There is a clear need in addressing the past and the legacy of the conflict on children and young people in Northern Ireland, to address the under resourcing of child and adolescent mental health services and to invest in suicide prevention, particularly in areas most impacted upon by the conflict.

5.17 There is considerable robust evidence to demonstrate that Northern Ireland has higher levels of children living in poverty than any other region in the UK or Ireland. An acknowledgement of the relationship between experience of the conflict and experience of poverty should be reflected in government policy to impact on poverty in the region, if those policies are to be successful.

5.18 The inter relationship between poverty and the conflict is deep rooted. Horgan[64] has noted that, "…*there is a marked concentration of poverty in a relatively small proportion of Northern Ireland's electoral wards. Many of these wards are in and around the areas most impacted by the conflict*".[65] This is illustrated by the fact that in 2006, 25 out of a total of 566 wards recorded child poverty above 75% compared with 180 out of 10,000 wards in Britain.[66]

5.19 Recent research supports this finding with the highest levels of poverty being concentrated in areas most impacted upon by the Northern Ireland conflict. In Belfast 60 %, 61%, 64% and 68% of children are living in poverty in the Ardoyne, Whiterock, Falls and Colin Glen Districts respectively. 61% and 63% of children in the Brandywell and Creggan Central Districts of Derry and 66% of children East Strabane live in poverty.[67]

5.20 Poverty is a defining factor in the lives of many children and their families in Northern Ireland, negatively affecting health and well-being, educational and employment opportunities and access to quality accommodation[68]. The proportion of children living in poverty in Northern Ireland is higher than the UK average, (20%) with Derry (35%) and Belfast (34%) placed 4th and 5th respectively in a league table of the UK

[63] *Ibid*
[64] 2005
[65] *Op cit*. 45. p. 7
[66] McLaughlin, E. and Monteith, M. (2006) *Child and Family Poverty in Northern Ireland* Belfast: OFMDFM Equality Directorate Research Branch
[67] http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/why-end-child-poverty/poverty-in-your-area
[68] Save the Children, 2007

local authority areas with the highest rates of child poverty based on figures for 2012[69].

5.21 Benefit levels remain below the poverty line and income levels of lone parent families and couples with children are lower than comparable levels in Britain. Income deprivation is compounded as poor households pay proportionately more in Northern Ireland for essential goods and services such as food, fuel, transport, insurance and banking. People living in the 20% most deprived electoral wards have poorer life expectancy, higher rates of admission to hospital, more infant deaths and more suicides than Northern Ireland's population as a whole[70].

5.22 The Institute of Fiscal Studies predicts that due to welfare cuts and other austerity measures, child poverty rates in Northern Ireland are likely to rise in 2020 to 30%[71].

5.23 By 2014-2015, it was estimated that spending on benefits across the UK will be £18 billion less than it was in 2011(in cash terms), with the loss to NI benefit recipients of more than £600 million per year.[72] These cuts are happening at the same time as increasing costs in everyday living (for example housing and household services, which includes utility bills, climbed 30% between August 2007 and January 2013, transport climbed 23%, food and drink climbed 34%[73]) potentially pushing greater numbers of children and families into poverty.

5.24 A report from the Centre for Social Justice[74] commented that the disillusionment surrounding worklessness among young people has become a critical problem in Northern Ireland. In January - March 2014, there were 32,000 young people (aged from 16 to 24) in Northern Ireland who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).[75] For the period January - March 2014, the Northern Ireland NEETs rate for those aged 16-24 stood at 14.6%, compared to a UK average of 12.6%.[76] Youth unemployment is also extremely high. From April – June 2014, the rate of unemployment amongst young people aged 18 – 24 was 19.4%. The rate was as high as 24.7% in July – September 2013.[77] A recent study found that a third of long term unemployed young people have contemplated taking their own lives. The research found that long term unemployed young people were more than twice as likely as their peers to have been prescribed anti-depressants. One in three (32%) had contemplated suicide, while one in four (24%) had self-harmed. The report found 40% of jobless young people had faced symptoms of mental illness, including

[69] http://www.barnardos.org.uk/130212_ecp_local_report_final__2_.pdf
[70] Haydon, 2008
[71] *Child and Working-Age Poverty in Northern Ireland from 2010 to 2020*, James Browne, Andrew Hood and Robert Joyce, Institute for Fiscal Studies
[72] Tomlinson, M., Kelly, G. (2011) Response to NI's draft budget, Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK Project, p.1
[73] http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/business-news/high-cost-of-living-in-northern-ireland-29077204.html
[74] Breakthrough Northern Ireland, September 2010
[75] 'Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey' January – March 2014, p.17 http://www.detini.gov.uk/lfs_quarterly_supplement_january-march_2014.pdf?rev=0
[76] 'Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey' January – March 2014, p.18 http://www.detini.gov.uk/lfs_quarterly_supplement_january-march_2014.pdf?rev=0
[77] http://www.detini.gov.uk/index/what-we-do/deti-stats-index/labour_market_statistics/stats-labour-market-unemployment.htm Table 2.9 'Unemployment by age'.

suicidal thoughts, feelings of self-loathing and panic attacks, as a direct result of unemployment.[78]

5.25 Statistics on educational achievement in Northern Ireland have indicated concerns about underachievement among working class pupils and in particular working class Protestant boys[79]. In 2001, OFMDFM[80] concluded that the educational non-progressor was most likely to be a Protestant working class male. Recent research from the Community Relations Council[81] found that disproportionate educational underachievement of this particular group of young people continues. 19.7% of Protestant boys who were entitled to free school meals (FSME) achieved at least 5+ GCSEs A*-C or higher (or equivalent) compared with 32.4% of Protestant girls (FSME), 33.2% of Roman Catholic boys (FSME) and 43.8% of Roman Catholic Girls (FSME).

5.26 Additional research[82] which found high levels of under achievement in education by working class Protestant males found that that differentials in educational performance lie (to a degree of 80% or more) outside schools and the classroom. It found that systemic educational improvement will require comprehensive, long-term responses to inequality. The research also highlighted the deindustrialization and the loss of traditional labour markets and skills. Generations of working class Protestants were heavily involved in manufacturing industry and viewed getting a trade as the main form of educational requirement. The collapse in this labour market and the movement towards a consumerist, service driven economy has, to a degree, left elements of the Protestant working class stranded with redundant skills-sets and abilities. It is clear that this results in a sense of alienation for this group of young people.

5.27 Children who are underachieving in education are at a greater disadvantage than they have been for some time due to limits in their progression in education preventing them from being able to compete for education and employment opportunities. These children tend to be from socially deprived areas and /or face barriers to learning such as SEN or additional needs related to a disability.

5.28 Education is a fundamental element in the provision of opportunities for children and young people in Northern Ireland. The lack of opportunity for children and young people, through the education system failing them, results in a sense of frustration and resentment which manifests itself in a number of negative ways in our communities. In arriving at long term solutions for Northern Ireland to prevent societal regression the Inquiry must consider ways to restore hope to our young people. This involves focusing on the provision of opportunities for children and young people and addressing inequalities in educational attainment by certain groups of young people.

[78] The Prince's Trust Macquarie Youth Index, January 2014
[79] Free School Meal entitlement is used as a proxy indicator of deprivation as specific data on pupil's class background are not recorded in official Department of Education databases
[80] OFMDFM (2001) Report on Participation Rates in Further and Higher Education
[81] Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Number 3, P. Nolan, March 2014
[82] A Call to Action *Educational Disadvantage and the Protestant Working Class,* Issued by Dawn Purvis MLA and the Working Group on Educational disadvantage and the Protestant working class, March 2011

5.29 In Northern Ireland 322,000 people or 18% of the population living in private households have some degree of disability. When broken down this means that 285,000 people or 21% of adults and 26,000 children or 6% have a disability. 37% of households in Northern Ireland include at least one person with a disability and 20% of these contain more than one person with a disability. Prevalence increases with age ranging from 5% among young adults to 67% among those who are very old (85+) and male prevalence rates are only higher than female rates amongst the youngest adults (16 to 25) - 6% of males compared with 4% of females. 8% of boys aged 15 and under were found to have a disability, compared with 4% of girls of the same age[83].

5.30 Goretti Horgan's research[84] refers to the fact that there are higher levels of disability and ill health in Northern Ireland than in other parts Great Britain. Some of this is due to physical and mental damage caused by the conflict. But much is related to higher levels of poverty and poor diet generally, particularly the poor diet of many expectant mothers. She also states that, in spite of these higher levels of disability, there is poorer provision of services for families dealing with disability. Some of this dearth of services is likely to be because of the high costs of duplicating some services due to the segregated nature of society here.

5.31 Almost half of all claimants of out of work disability benefits in Northern Ireland suffer from mental or behavioural conditions[85].

5.32 Higher levels of disability in Northern Ireland is just one of the legacies of the Northern Ireland conflict. There are a number of factors to consider when examining disability as an issue, including the fact that areas most impacted upon by the conflict have higher rates of both physical and mental disability. The lack of adequate service provision to meet the needs of those with disabilities, the additional cost to families of raising a child with a disability which is estimated to be three times more[86] and the lack of opportunities for children and young people with disabilities all contribute to a sense of alienation and frustration in communities which live with the legacy of the conflict.

5.33 The reality in Northern Ireland is that the communities most impacted upon by and living with the legacy of the conflict are living in poverty. Research shows that worklessness, benefit dependency and poverty are defining factors of the lives of those living in interface areas[87] and areas most impacted upon by the conflict. Children and young people living in poor communities which as a result of the conflict are almost entirely religiously segregated are often socially excluded and lacking in hope for the future. Rising youth unemployment, poor educational attainment of children from socially deprived areas and a lack of opportunity for children and young

[83] DHSSPS's "Physical and Sensory Disability Strategy 2011 – 2015" Consultation December 2010
[84] *"The particular circumstances of children in Northern Ireland",* Horgan G November 2005
[85] DSD IB and SDA statistics, February 2010 data, updated December 2010
[86] Contact A Family for families with disabled children, Facts and Figures http://www.cafamily.org.uk/media-enquiries/
[87] *Op cit.* 48

people is resulting in a sense of frustration and resentment of the 'other' community through a perception that their community has been left behind. In arriving at long term solutions for Northern Ireland it is vital that we consider ways to address these fundamental issues. This will involve a clear focus on the provision of opportunities for children and young people, the provision of critical services such as CAMHS and investment in addressing child poverty in line with the Government's obligations under the Child Poverty Act 2010. All of these actions must be approached from the principle of equality of opportunity.

5.34 CLC believes that in order to achieve long term solutions in the best interests of all of our children and young people and their communities that what is necessary is a human rights framework. The imperative of a human rights framework was recognised by all involved in reaching a peace settlement in Northern Ireland.

5.35 The Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations on Children and Armed Conflict, Mr Olara Otunnu after his second visit to Northern Ireland argued that,

"Following conflict, the prospects of recovery often depend largely on giving priority attention to young people in the rebuilding process, rehabilitating young people affected by war, and restoring their sense of hope. This issue must become a priority. All key actors responsible for developing post-conflict peace-building programmes …. should make the rights and protection of children a central concern in their planning, programming and resource allocation."

He appealed to political leaders,

"to address the basic concerns of children in Northern Ireland, particularly social and educational integration, youth unemployment, substance abuse and poverty, improved access to health facilities and housing, increased access to counselling, and improved administration of child protection and juvenile justice. Children's rights should be incorporated into the new Northern Ireland Bill of Rights."[88]

5.36 The Bill of Rights was an integral part of the peace agreement for Northern Ireland, ensuring that past abuses of human rights which fuelled and maintained the conflict could never re-occur, and that society moved forwards on the basis of respect for human rights and equality for all. Children and young people have been particularly adversely affected by the conflict and violence in our society over recent decades including post the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement. The guaranteeing of protection and respect for children's rights are essential elements in securing a better future for all children, something which a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland has significant potential to help achieve. A jurisdictionally specific Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland as provided for in the Agreement represents a unique opportunity to enshrine children's rights at a constitutional level in Northern Ireland and to consolidate the protection of children's rights into one binding and enforceable document. In so doing

[88] United Nations General Assembly Fifty-fifth session: Agenda item 110: Promotion and protection of children's rights. 3 October 2000:pp 9-10

there will be a strong robust foundation on which to address the issues of sectarianism and division.

5.37 The political, social, economic and cultural context of children's lives in Northern Ireland illustrate how the conflict and its legacy continue to cast a dark shadow over children and young people's lives today. The harsh reality of too many of our children and young people's lives also underscores how critically important it is that the potential of the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland to address many of these fundamental rights issues for children and young people is fully realised.

5.38 It is extremely disappointing that no significant progress has been made in delivering a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland since the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission advised the UK government on recommendations for the content of a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland in 2008. CLC wishes to see a renewed focus on and commitment to the delivery of a Bill of Rights for all of the people of Northern Ireland.

6. Conclusion

6.1 CLC welcomes this Inquiry into Building A United Community being carried out by the Committee of the First and Deputy First Minister. We hope that our comments have been useful in taking the Inquiry forward. CLC believes that equality of opportunity and good relations are central components to addressing intolerance and addressing community division, as well as ensuring the meaningful involvement of children and young people in decision making including in their communities. Equality of opportunity and good relations are also the key to providing long terms solutions to the problems faced by so many of our young people who live with division and inequality on a daily basis. We look forward to the progression of the Inquiry and are grateful for the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee.

Committee for the Environment

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To: **Kathy O'Hanlon**

Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

From: **Sheila Mawhinney**
Clerk to the Committee for the Environment

Date: **16 September 2014**

Subject: **Inquiry into Building a United Community**

1. At its meeting on 11 September 2014 the Committee for the Environment considered correspondence from your Committee inviting it to respond to the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

2. The Committee did not wish to make a response to the Inquiry.

Sheila Mawhinney
Clerk
Committee for the Environment

Committee for Finance and Personnel

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for Finance and Personnel

Room 144
Parliament Buildings
Tel: 028 9052 1843

From: **Shane McAteer**

Clerk to the Committee for Finance and Personnel

Date: **10 October 2014**

To: **Kathy O'Hanlon, Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister**

Inquiry into Building a United Community

At its meeting 10 September 2014 the Committee for Finance and Personnel considered your memo of 8 July 2014 in respect of your Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community. The Committee subsequently wrote to the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) to establish whether it would be responding to the Inquiry, in terms of any relevance to the Department's remit.

At its meeting on 8 October 2014, the Committee noted the attached correspondence from DFP which stated that it would not be responding to the Inquiry. On the basis of this, the Committee therefore agreed that it would also not make a submission to the Inquiry.

SHANE MCATEER
☎ 21843

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Mr Shane McAteer
Clerk
Committee for Finance and Personnel
Room 419
Parliament Buildings
Stormont

Our Ref CFP/363/11-15

2 October 2014

Dear Shane,

Your letter of 15 September 2014 requested that the Committee for Finance and Personnel receive a copy of any submission made by DFP into the COFMDFM inquiry regarding Building a United Community.

This is to advise that DFP has made no submission to the COFMDFM inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

GEARÓID CASSIDY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Committee for Social Development

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
Room 284, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX
Tel: 028 9052 1864

To: **Karen Jardine, Senior Assistant Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister**

From: **Kevin Pelan, Clerk to the Committee for Social Development**

Date: **22 September 2014**

Subject: **Building a United Community**

At its meeting on 4 September 2014, the Committee for Social Development noted the Terms of Reference for your Committee's inquiry into Building a United Community.

Given the busy work schedule with its own inquiry, the Committee provided no comment on the Terms of Reference and I am therefore writing to advise you of a nil response.

Dr Kevin Pelan

Ext 21864

Committee on the Administration of Justice

CAJ
Committee on the Administration of Justice
Promoting Justice / Protecting Rights

Written Evidence to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister inquiry into 'Building a United Community'

Committee on the Administration of Justice ('CAJ')

October 2014

CAJ is an independent human rights organisation with cross community membership in Northern Ireland and beyond. It was established in 1981 and lobbies and campaigns on a broad range of human rights issues. CAJ seeks to secure the highest standards in the administration of justice in Northern Ireland by ensuring that the Government complies with its obligations in international human rights law.

Background: the 'T:BUC' strategy

The Northern Ireland Executive's *'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy*, ('T:BUC') was published on May 23 2013.[1] This strategy has been commonly referred to as community relations, anti-sectarianism, integration or peace building strategy, and superseded the earlier Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration consulted on in 2010.[2]

The *T:BUC* strategy proposes legislation to potentially take forward two matters:

- Proposed changes to turn the Equality Commission into an 'Equality and Good Relations Commission' and add a 'good relations' section into Equality Impact Assessments;
- The incorporation of a definition of sectarianism in law;

Related to the T:BUC process was the establishment of a Panel of Parties to address matters such as parades and protests; flags, symbols and emblems and related matters; and dealing with the past. This led to the Haass-O'Sullivan talks and consequent Proposed Agreement published at the close of 2013.[3]

The Committee's Inquiry

In summer 2014 the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister announced it would undertake an inquiry into 'Building a United Community' with the purpose of informing the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism,

[1] Available at: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community [August 2013].
[2] See CAJ's submission no. S. 269 *'CAJ's response to the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister's consultation on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration'* November 2010.
[3] See CAJ briefing to Haass on T:BUC s418 (August 2013), 'Proposed Agreement Among the parties of the Northern Ireland Executive' 31 December 2013 (Haass-O'Sullivan Proposed Agreement) and Holder, Daniel 'The Haass / O'Sullivan Proposed Agreement on parades and flags: analysis from a human rights perspective' *Rights NI* 13 January 2014

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racism and other forms of intolerance as well as recommendations on policy on integration. Among the terms of reference are an examination of theory and practice with regard to 'good relations' and seeking views on what 'good relations' means.[4] This CAJ submission will focus on these questions in relation to the two areas envisaged for potential T:BUC legislation, namely 'good relations' policy and the definition of sectarianism.

'Good relations' and T:BUC

The T:BUC strategy proposes transforming the Equality Commission into an '*Equality and Good Relations Commission*' and granting the body additional 'good relations' powers. In addition, and the focus of this section, the T:BUC strategy proposes changes to the 'Equality Impact Assessments' (EQIAs) required under the existing 'section 75' statutory equality duty. The change, if implemented, would formally include 'good relations' considerations within such impact assessments. This revives an aborted proposal envisaged by the ill-fated direct-rule '*Shared Future'* strategy almost a decade ago, albeit with a different formulation. In this instance the proposal is for a 'good relations' section in EQIAs to measure the implementation of the T:BUC strategy itself. T:BUC proposes:

> An augmented [Equality] impact assessment will be developed that assesses the extent to which policies and other interventions contribute to meeting the objectives of [T:BUC][5]

It is worth noting T:BUC does not provide for 'good relations' impact assessments to be on a par with the counterpart equality considerations, rather envisaging a good relations 'section' in EQIAs. T:BUC itself also references the intended primacy of the equality duty in the current formulation of Section 75. However, in CAJs view the proposals as they stand, even if these caveats are honoured, still risk undermining the equality duty. When T:BUC proposals were formally released, CAJ published our own research – '*Unequal Relations*'[6] which collated evidence about how 'good relations' considerations were already being interpreted in existing EQIAs. Although not required by law some public authorities have already included 'good relations' impact considerations in EQIAs. The key finding of the CAJ research was that equality and rights goals were being undermined by the then interpretation and application of 'good relations' in EQIAs. The research concluded that this would be exacerbated if 'good relations' criteria were further formalised into EQIAs in an ill-defined and subjective manner. At worst our concern is that the good relations duty, rather than being a duty focusing on tackling sectarianism and other forms of racism as originally anticipated, essentially becomes a crude political veto by taking a lay definition that the 'good relations' duty is engaged by any action which is politically contentious, even if such action is precisely in pursuit of the equality and rights based goals EQIAs were designed to promote.

[4] Terms of Reference available at: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Committees/Office-of-the-First-Minister-and-deputy-First-Minister/Inquiries/Building-a-United-Community/Terms-of-Reference/ [October 2014].
[5] T:BUC para 6.30, also pages 8 and 31. Reference is also made to an enhanced good relations 'section' in Equality Impact Assessments on page 6 and page 27.
[6] CAJ 'Unequal Relations: Policy, the Section 75 duties and Equality Commission advice: has 'good relations' been allowed to undermine equality?' May 2013

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What is 'good relations'?

CAJ notes that the T:BUC strategy references the concept of 'good relations' 179 times but does not define it. 'Good Relations' is also not defined in law in Northern Ireland, despite having been defined in the counterpart duty in Great Britain for some time. The statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 across England, Scotland and Wales, defines 'good relations' as being primarily about tackling prejudice and promoting understanding across all the equality groups in that legislation.[7] The Committee seeks views as to what good relations should mean. CAJ advocates that the existing legal definition in GB is adopted in a format consistent with Northern Ireland legislation and that the following definition is adopted into law:

> **good relations …means having regard, in particular, to the desirability of — (a) tackling prejudice, and (b) promoting understanding.**

CAJ regards as untenable the contradictory position that 'good relations' is both highly important but that it is undesirable or impossible to define it. In our view the above definition would not only help prevent misinterpretation of the duty but would also assist in supporting a framework for existing good practice in good relations work.

Should 'good relations' be clearly defined as above we would also suggest going beyond restricting the concept to the current three categories and covering the full range of equality categories. The section 75(2)[8] duty at present only covers the three grounds of religious belief, political opinion and racial group[9] and does not extend, for example, to gender. The only similar current duty in Northern Ireland on other grounds is the duty, among other matters, to promote positive attitudes to persons with disabilities, under disability discrimination legislation.[10]

Good Relations and 'tackling prejudice and promoting understanding'

In relation to what being 'in particular' (i.e. not exclusively but primarily) about tackling prejudice and promoting understanding means the Explanatory Notes to the GB Equality Act 2010 give examples of what is intended in practice.[11] In relation to 'tackling prejudice' strategies to tackle homophobic bulling in schools are mentioned (as the good relations duties in GB cover sexual orientation). In relation to 'promoting understanding' the example of measures to facilitate understanding and conciliation between different communities is referenced. The above definition therefore provides for a duty which encompasses tackling sectarianism and other forms of racism as well as other anti-prejudice initiatives and, where appropriate, also provides for reconciliation initiatives as part of 'promoting understanding'.

[7] s149 of the Equality Act 2010
[8] Of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.
[9] There is also a duty on district councils to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups under section 67 of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.
[10] s49A Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended).
[11] Explanatory Notes, Equality Act 2010, paragraph 484.

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To take a practical example defining good relations as '*tackling prejudice and promoting understanding'* could contribute to tackling the causes of the 'segregated' nature of housing in our communities, whereby persons are effectively prevented from moving into certain areas in which they would be a minority.[12] If the categories were extended the duty could also contribute to tackling prejudice, and hence resultant hostility, against other equality groups.[13]

The above formulation of 'tackling prejudice and promoting understanding' also concurs with and hence can assist with the implementation of the state's human rights obligations. Rather than promoting a 'Northern Ireland exceptionalist' approach, framing 'good relations' in this way allows interpretation of the concept to draw on international instruments and good practice. Such instruments are themselves an important interpretative instrument to flesh out the meaning of terms such as 'promoting understanding'. Some relevant duties include:

[12] There are differing approaches in the good relations sphere in relation to addressing the goal of more integrated housing, depending in part on the analysis of the cause of the problem. As a crude 'ideal type' if there is an understanding that the cause of segregation is individual choice, that persons in single identity areas are culturally insular and do not wish to mix, a 'good relations' policy response would be one of seeking to engender shared housing communities through quotas or similar mechanisms. To CAJ this is not the right approach. In addition to questions as to whether such an understanding of the causes of segregation is in itself based on prejudice, such approaches will conflict with the equality duty where there are existing inequalities and parity or quota based approaches replicate or exacerbate them. In seeking to implement *A Shared Future g*overnment proposed to amend legislation to remove protection against religious/political to facilitate the envisaged shared or mixed housing schemes (see Shared Future Triennial Action Plan, 2006 p18). CAJ at the time noted that if there were an equal playing field the worthwhile goal of integrated housing could be pursued without conflict with equality imperatives, however in the context of clear differentials, the allocation of 'shared' housing on the basis of (religious) quotas would perpetuate inequalities, allocating resources away from those in greatest objective need, which we argued in itself would surely, in lay terms, undermine 'good relations' (CAJ, Rhetoric and Reality, 2006, page 95.) Such an initiative in our view would not be an appropriate interpretation of 'good relations' duties in the context of housing policy. Alternatively if the understanding of the primary cause of segregation is that persons do not move into a particular area where they would be in a minority, largely because of a real and genuine fear of sectarian or racist intimidation on account of their background, the 'good relations' approach to remedying the problem, and hence lessening segregation, is precisely to tackle sectarianism, other forms of racism and those who advocate it. Such an approach facilitates everybodys right to housing and promotes more integrated communities by tackling the actual causes of segregation. In addition, opposition to needs based approaches to housing provision and regeneration on the grounds they can generate community 'tension' can be mitigated by a duty to 'tackle prejudice and promote understanding' which would require a public authority to explain its approach of putting in resources to an area is on the basis of objective need rather than one which unduly favours a particular group.

[13] For a positive example of the impact in Great Britain of framing the good relations duty this way see the outworking of the *Core Issues Trust v Transport for London (TfL) [*2013] EWHC 651) judicial review. This upheld the decision of the London authorities not to carry adverts on its buses which insinuated people could be cured of being gay. The court found that not only was this a justified restriction on freedom of religious expression to protect the rights of others, but also related to discharging the properly formulated 'good relations' duty to tackle prejudice and promote understanding. The Court concluded "under the Equality Act 2010, TfL was under a duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment against gays and to 'foster good relations' 'tackle prejudice' and 'promote understanding' between those who have same-sex orientation and those who do not. Displaying the advertisement would have been in breach of that duty" [paragraph 177]. Earlier the judgement elaborated "In my judgment, TfL would be acting in breach of its duty under section 149 if it allowed the Trust's advertisement to appear on its buses, as it encourages discrimination, and does not foster good relations or tackle prejudice or promote understanding, between those with same-sex sexual orientation and those who do not" [144].

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- 'State Parties undertake to adopt immediate and effective measures... with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups...' (Article 7 [UN] *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* ICERD)
- State Parties to: 'raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities; To combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life; promote awareness of the capabilities and contributions of persons with disabilities.' (Article 8 *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, UNCRPD)
- Parties to 'encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity,' (Article 6 Council of Europe *Framework Convention for National Minorities*, FCNM).
- 'The Parties undertake to promote, by appropriate measures, mutual understanding between all the linguistic groups of the country and in particular the inclusion of respect, understanding and tolerance in relation to regional or minority languages'... (Article 7(3) Council of Europe *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* ECRML).

A 'good relations' duty *can only contribute* to the above goals however if it is actually interpreted and implemented compatibly with them. In the present context whereby good relations has not been defined in law there has been poor experience in this regard to the extent that a Council of Europe committee itself raised concerns that the concept of 'good relations', in the T:BUC predecessor policy, had taken a direction of substituting conceptual human rights goals. The FCNM Advisory Committee also raised concerns that 'good relations' was reportedly being used to veto minority rights initiatives:

> ...the CSI Strategy has developed the concept of 'good relations' apparently to substitute the concept of intercultural dialogue and integration of society. The Advisory Committee has been informed that, in some instances, the need for keeping good relations has been used as justification for not implementing provisions in favour of persons belonging to minorities...[14]

CAJ recalls that the Equality Commission (ECNI) in 2005 produced a working definition of good relations, focusing on the growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge its religious, political and racial context.[15] The ECNI subsequently recommended public authorities adopted a definition of good relations but were (rightly) not proscriptive that it should be this particular definition.[16] The ECNI working definition is lengthy and not

[14] Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for National Minorities (Third Opinion on the UK adopted 30 June2011) ACFC/OP/III(2011)006, paragraph 126.
[15] The full text is "The growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms." ECNI, Guide to the Statutory Duties, 2005, p81.
[16] Promoting Good Relations, Guide for Public Authorities 2007, paragraph 3.26.

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itself designed for legislation. CAJ notes the ECNI is now advocating support for a definition to be adopted in legislation, that its stakeholders have a 'clear desire' for such a definition and had expressed support for the GB definition.[17] CAJ is of the view that it has become clear that legal certainty needs to be brought to the concept of good relations and that the definition in law in Great Britain should be adapted into Northern Ireland law. CAJ would regard this as an essential pre-requisite to any addition of a 'good relations' section into Equality Impact Assessments. As recommended in our *Unequal Relations* research, CAJ would also recommend that an appropriate tailored methodology, duly subordinate to and compatible with equality assessments and international obligations, would also be developed for such a purpose, and that a duty is placed on the oversight body, the ECNI, to interpret good relations compatibly with human rights standards.[18]

T:BUC states that 'good relations' is to refer to meeting the aims and commitments in the T:BUC strategy itself. Whilst this may be less problematic than a subjective, face value concept of good relations, it is difficult to see how this would be operationalised. The alternative is to formulate the meaning of good relations on the face of the legislation to give it specific meaning drawing on the existing definition in law in Great Britain as we have suggested above.

The T:BUC strategy also foresees the transformation of the Equality Commission into an Equality and Good Relations Commission.[19] The TBUC strategy enumerates 11 new statutory duties the new Commission is to discharge. It is debatable as to whether the implications of the powers envisaged in T:BUC have been thought through and CAJ is concerned that such proposals could be retrogressive to the ECNI's equality remit. To give one example these new duties include one to "*To enforce and investigate as appropriate where there is a failure to comply with section 75(2)".* This presumably means that the Commission will have new powers to investigate and enforce the existing good relations duty. However it is not clear how this differs from the ECNI's current enforcement powers over the s75(2) duty. These powers were exercised recently in its investigation report into the naming of the Raymond McCreesh park in which the ECNI held there had been a breach of the 'good relations' duty.

In summary, and in addition to the above matters, CAJ urges the Committee to recommend the incorporation into Northern Ireland law of the following definition of good relations:

> **good relations …means having regard, in particular, to the desirability of (a) tackling prejudice, and (b) promoting understanding.**

In order to provide further evidence as to our view on the need for the definition of 'good relations' to be taken forward an appendix to this paper provides further background information on the subject of 'good relations' in EQIAs.

[17] TBUC / Good Relations – Stakeholder Event (26 June 2014): Translating policy to practice Summary of Key Points raised in discussion (available at: http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/TBUC/workshop1.pdf accessed October 2014)
[18] CAJ, Unequal Relations, 2013, p64.
[19] Paragraph 6.29

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Definition of sectarianism

The *T:BUC* strategy states that appropriate consensus will be sought around including a definition of sectarianism in draft legislation. CAJ welcomes this important aim, and stresses the importance of correctly defining sectarianism in legislation. In the present context, despite the term being regularly used by public authorities, there is often no official definition or restrictive or vague definitions are adopted, that tend to defer to limited interpersonal *manifestations* of sectarianism (e.g. hate crimes) rather than defining sectarianism per se. [20] It is notable that whilst a draft interim definition is included in the T:BUC strategy this definition is itself restricted to individual behaviour and appears derived not from a definition of sectarianism per se but rather from a definition of sectarian chanting at sports matches.[21]

CAJ believes it is not sustainable to argue 'sectarianism' here is a unique phenomena, beyond definition. The primary treaty bodies dealing with anti-racism at United Nations and Council of Europe level (to which the UK is a party) have both stated that sectarianism in Northern Ireland should be treated as a specific form of racism.[22] UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination stated its position following representations from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. The Commission had raised concerns that "policy presenting sectarianism as a concept entirely separate from racism problematically locates the phenomenon outside the well-developed discourse of commitments, analysis and practice reflected in international human rights law" and hence was not harnessing this framework to tackle sectarianism.[23] The Commission has also stated "This does not mean that

[20] For example the PSNI, in its published 'hate crimes definitions' states "*The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican*."

[21] T:BUC states "*For the purposes of this Strategy, sectarianism is defined as: threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour or attitudes towards a person by reason of that person's religious belief or political opinion; or to an individual as a member of such a group.", (paragraph 1.36, s*ee also paragraph 5.28). Section 37 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 makes chanting at a major sports match an offence if it is 'sectarian' or specifically "consists of or includes matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting to a person by reason of that person's colour, race, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins, religious belief, sexual orientation or disability" (subsection 3(c)). Despite discussion during its legislative passage ultimately the Act did not provide a definition of sectarian chanting.

[22] In 2011 the UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination made clear that *"Sectarian discrimination in Northern Ireland [...] attract[s] the provisions of ICERD in the context of "inter-sectionality" between religion and racial discrimination*" (paragraph 1(e) UN Doc CERD/C/GBR/18-20, List of themes on the UK). Later in the same year the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for National Minorities directly addressed the approach in the predecessor draft strategy to *T:BUC* raising concerns that the Committee "*finds the approach in the CSI Strategy to treat sectarianism as a distinct issue rather than as a form of racism problematic, as it allows sectarianism to fall outside the scope of accepted anti-discrimination and human rights protection standards*" (Third Opinion on the United Kingdom adopted on 30 June 2011 ACFC/OP/III(2011)006, paragraph 126).

[23] The Commission elaborated "This risks non-human rights compliant approaches, and non-application of the well-developed normative tools to challenge prejudice, promote tolerance and tackle discrimination found in international standards. In particular, it seriously limits the application of ICERD to Northern Ireland, and therefore obligations on the state to tackle sectarianism along with other forms of racism." Northern Ireland

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sectarianism should not continue to be individually named and singled out just as other particular forms of racism are, for example, anti-Semitism or Islamophobia"[24] and the UN has emphasised that in tackling sectarianism care should be taken not to neglect tackling other forms of racism experienced by "vulnerable ethnic minority groups in Northern Ireland."[25]

It follows that it is clear what sectarianism is and that its definition should draw on such international standards. The benefit of this is that such standards also provide a tested framework in relation to addressing sectarianism.

The UN International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) does not provide a definition of racism per se but defines 'racial discrimination'.[26] The 1978 UN declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice does provide a lengthy definition of racism, and sets out a broad range of phenomena which would encompass manifestations of racism.[27]

The Council of Europe specialist body in the field, the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in its recommendation on key elements of legislation against racism and racial discrimination, defines racism as follows:

> "racism" shall mean the belief that a ground such as race,[28] colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons.

Human Rights Commission, '*Parallel Report on the 18th and 19th Periodic Reports of the United Kingdom under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*' (ICERD), paras 17-23.

[24] NI Human Rights Commission '*Parallel Report to the Advisory Committee on the Third Monitoring Report of the United Kingdom on the Framework Convention on National Minorities*, February 2011 paragraph 59.

[25] Concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on the UK, 1 September 2011, CERD/C/GBR/CO/18-20, paragraph 20.

[26] In Article 1(1): *In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*

[27] Article 2(1): *Any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which bases value judgments on racial differentiation, has no scientific foundation and is contrary to the moral and ethical principles of humanity; (2) Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behavior, structural arrangements and institutionalized practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable; it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as in anti-social beliefs and acts; it hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practice it, divides nations internally, impedes international co-operation and gives rise to political tensions between peoples; it is contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and, consequently, seriously disturbs international peace and security; (3) Racial prejudice, historically linked with inequalities in power, reinforced by economic and social differences between individuals and groups, and still seeking today to justify such inequalities, is totally without justification*. Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice*, 27 November 1978 Adopted and proclaimed by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO at its twentieth session, on 27 November 1978).*

[28] The recommendation elaborates in relation to the use of the term race: "*Since all human beings belong to the same species, ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different "races". However, in this Recommendation*

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This definition could be drawn upon and tailored to define sectarianism in Northern Ireland for example as follows:

> "Sectarianism" shall mean the belief that a ground such as religion, political opinion, language, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons.[29]

CAJ urges the definition of sectarianism in legislation to draw on international standards relating to racism. We draw attention to the above definition which is derived from recommendations from the Council of Europe specialist agency as an option to this end.[30]

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ECRI uses this term in order to ensure that those persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to "another race" are not excluded from the protection provided for by the legislation.

[29] Council of Europe CRI(2003)8 *ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 7 On National Legislation To Combat racism And Racial Discrimination Adopted On 13 December 2002.*

[30] An alternative definition is provided by the Institute of Conflict Research as follows "*Sectarianism should be considered as a form of racism specific to the Irish context. Sectarianism is the diversity of prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and practices between members of the two majority communities in and about Northern Ireland, who may be defined as Catholic or Protestant; Irish or British; Nationalist or Unionist; Republican or Loyalist; or combinations thereof." See* Jarman, Neil. 2012 'Defining Sectarianism and Sectarian Hate Crime' Belfast: ICR, p10.

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Appendix: Good Relations and Equality Impact Assessments, some background

The current 'good relations' duty was not provided for in Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. The Northern Ireland Office nevertheless included it in the Agreements' implementation legislation as section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Unlike its nine ground equality counterpart under section 75(1) of the same Act, the good relations duty is restricted to the three grounds of political opinion, religious belief and racial group.

At the time of the legislation there was considerable concern among equality focused NGOs and trade unions that a subjective 'good relations' duty would be open to interpretations in a manner which would actually undermine equality initiatives on the grounds they might lead to 'community tensions'. An example from Great Britain, from the *Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)*, illustrates this point well:

> ...in one area, officers recommended that regeneration funding should be allocated to a predominantly ethnic minority area, based on strong evidence of need. The council refused to approve this and redirected the funding to predominantly white British areas. A number of interviewees in this area felt this was motivated by fear of a 'white backlash'.[31]

The fear was that an undefined 'good relations' duty could be used to institutionalise a practice whereby equality and rights initiatives were blocked on the grounds that there were objections to them. In effect the duty could become a veto-mechanism for the opponents of rights and equality to stifle positive action. Back in 1998 the Labour Government agreed to put safeguards on the face of the legislation to address these concerns. The main two safeguards were first ensuring the equality limb of the duty had primacy and second formulating equality impact assessments so they were about equality. More recently, in light of this being insufficient there has been discussion on defining 'good relations' on the face of the legislation to bring a measure of legal certainty to its use.

The legislation was formulated in a way that ensured primacy for the equality duty, with the good relations duty to be undertaken, for example, 'without prejudice' to it. The purpose of this was to introduce the safeguard that 'good relations' could not trump equality of opportunity considerations. There have been a number of attempts over the years to reverse this. This includes two recent proposals by the Alliance Party to introduce equality and good relations considerations without this safeguard into the Local Government Bill.[32] On both occasions the Petition of Concern mechanism was used to prevent this formulation and protect the safeguards over the equality duty. Instead the SDLP Minister put forward a clause

[31] Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) *Formal Investigation into Regeneration and the Racial Equality Duty* September 2007, page 24. In the above CRE 'white backlash' regeneration scenario the correct 'good relations' response would have been not to divert funding to the dominant ethnic group but to go out into the community and explain that resources were being put into ethnic minority areas on the basis of objective need, i.e. *to tackle prejudice and promote understanding*.

[32] Insofar as the community planning functions of the new councils would consider both equality and good relations among the long term objectives for improving social wellbeing. See Official Report (Hansard) Northern Ireland Assembly Consideration stage (18-19 March 2014) and Further Consideration Stage (1 April 2014).

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which stated "the reference to improving the social well-being of the district includes promoting equality of opportunity in accordance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and, without prejudice to this, having regard to the desirability of promoting good relations" which, as the Minister told the assembly was "framed to ensure that the type of existing safeguards between equality and good relations in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 are maintained."[33] Ultimately all parties accepted this formulation which now stands as section 66(3)(a) of the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 2014.

The second safeguard of note in the legislation is that the processes for Equality Impact Assessment, and identifying 'adverse impacts' and consequent alternative policies and mitigating measures apply to the 'equality of opportunity' duty only and not its more subjective 'good relations' counterpart. To this end the Equality Commission recommended a seven-stage methodology for EQIAs in its guidance on the equality duty. There have also been a number of attempts over the years to change this. The introduction of a 'good relations impact assessment' had been proposed under the NIO 2005 *Shared Future* Strategy, in this instance 'to assess impacts on the promotion of sharing.' This proposal was never legislated for. The Equality Commission in 2007 nevertheless recommended that public authorities do include 'good relations' considerations in their EQIAs, and that that public authorities use the same seven-stage methodology that had been carefully tailored and designed for equality, for their good relations assessments. However, the risk in applying such objective equality methodology to good relations is that simple negative perceptions, 'impacts' or 'tensions' which do not actually objectively reach the threshold of adverse impact, could in a lay sense be considered as such. Consequently it could then be read that the public authority is 'required' to take measures against such an 'adverse impact' on good relations grounds.

At worst CAJ has expressed concerns that interpreting the good relations duty in this way can turn EQIAs on their head and allow them to become a veto for equality and rights initiatives, including anti-poverty, housing and other policies based on targeting objective need. There are examples of this happening in the *Unequal Relations* research, which also cites Council of Europe human rights experts, as well as our local Human Rights Commission, having also raised concerns about 'good relations' considerations being used to thwart initiatives to promote the Irish language taken in accordance with treaty based obligations the UK has signed up to. In such scenarios it is often the opposing views of a section of the political constituency, 'attitudinal' differences across the community or even statistics showing that more Catholics than Protestants speak Irish which are put forward as 'evidence' of 'adverse impacts'. This risks prejudice or differentials which are not 'adverse' becoming the basis for policy. For example, in advice to Magherafelt Council the Equality Commission cites both 'mixed views' among councillors and a public attitudes survey from which it highlights that 'Of note' are 'differing views of Protestant and Roman Catholic communities towards the Irish Language' and goes on to caution against policies which are 'divisive'.[34] In response to this the Equality Coalition expressed concern about the potential impact of such a policy approach meaning advice could be given to caution against any equality initiative subject where there

[33] Official Report (Hansard) Northern Ireland Assembly Further Consideration Stage (1 April 2014).
[34] ECNI Comments on Magherafelt Council's Draft Irish Language Policy 25 June 2012.

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are political differentials in support, highlighting for example the implications for LGBT rights of such an approach.[35]

Some elected representatives have taken the view that 'good relations' as a concept has been misused. For example, in an Assembly debate on the duties in 2010 Stephen Farry MLA of the Alliance Party, stated that any use of the concept of good relations to veto equality initiatives was indicative of a "misunderstanding of the concept of good relations, which has been used and abused by certain politicians."[36] Since then there has been most prominently 'good relations' discourse over housing on the Girdwood barracks site. In 2011 the DSD Minister overturned an earlier decision to build around 200 new homes on the site, most of which would have likely been allocated to Catholics on the basis of objective need. The rights based NGO Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR) report the Minister used as a justification for his decision a prerequisite of 'cross community agreement' for revised proposals.[37] However, any approach which in effect is stating that houses cannot be built in an area on the grounds the 'other' might live in them, until the 'community' in that area agrees, is clearly not human rights compliant. Such a position would be similar to stating that ethnic minorities should not be allowed into the workplace until the majority white workforce agrees. In a rights-based approach rights to housing and employment should never be subject to such considerations.

Breaches of the existing 'good relations' duty: the Raymond McCreesh playpark report

The Equality Commission's April 2014 investigation report into Newry Council's decision, originally in 2001, to name a Council-run play park after IRA hunger striker Raymond McCreesh also provides some insight in the evolving application of the existing good relations duty.[38] The decision was unusual in that it found *substantive,* rather than *procedural* (e.g. failure to conduct an EQIA) breaches of both the equality and good relations duties. The decision provides an insight into how the Commission may interpret any expanded 'good relations' duties without the concept being further defined.

McCreesh significantly moves on the precedents of what the Commission is likely to find as a substantive breach of an Equality Scheme. Citing developments in equality case law in Great Britain, the Commission highlights the meaning of 'regard' and 'due regard', in the context that the public authority under the existing legislation is to have regard to the 'good relations' duty and due regard to the equality duty. Such mandatory commitments are contained within Equality Schemes. The report includes case law derived Baker-Brown principals of "due regard" which it summarises as follows:

[35] Correspondence from Co-Conveners of Equality Coalition 9 September 2013, to Chief Commissioner ECNI and response of 19 September 2013.
[36] Official Record, Northern Ireland Assembly, Equality and Good Relations Motion, 28 September 2010.
[37] PPR Background Briefing on the North Belfast Housing Inequality There is also some further indication of a 'good relations' considerations on the Minister's own blog
[38] Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Investigation under Paragraph 11, Section 9, Northern Ireland Act 1998, Newry and Mourne District Council Final Investigation Report, March 2014. For further analysis see CAJ Community Relations Week Commentary: Briefing Paper no 2: The Equality Commission's Raymond McCreesh Park investigation implications and analysis for proposed 'Equality and Good Relations Impact Assessments'.

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> ...the decision maker must be aware of the duty; the statutory goals must be taken into consideration; "due" regard means the amount that is appropriate in the circumstances of the case; it is NOT a duty to achieve a particular outcome or result; the duty must be fulfilled at the time the decision is being considered; it must be exercised in substance, with rigour and an open mind; it is non delegable; it is a continuing duty; and it is good practice to keep records[39]

The Commission also states:

> In general terms "to have regard" to a factor means that, when making a particular decision or formulating a policy, the decision maker must "take into account" or "give consideration to" that factor. To have "due regard" generally refers to the amount of regard i.e. "proportionate regard".[40]

The Commission elaborates that case law implies that elected representatives "cannot approach decision making in a biased way, with a closed mind and without impartial consideration of all relevant issues."[41] The Commission also holds that in order to fulfil the statutory duties "there must be evidence that the duty was exercised in substance, with rigour and an open mind."[42] This provides a broader framework for how substantive breaches of the statutory duties will be considered and has significant implications as its application in the *McCreesh* case demonstrates.

In *McCreesh* the ECNI held that the Equality Duty had been engaged as the play park name presented a 'significant chill factor' for families of a Protestant/Unionist background in relation to a using a council facility. It is this and the failure to adequately consider it which appears at the centre of the Commission's finding that the equality of opportunity duty had been breached. This has quite significant implications for a number of public authorities who would run their facilities in a manner which may constitute a 'significant chill factor' to others. The obvious example would be Council's who continue to fly the Union Flag from their leisure facilities. The Equality Commission has already cautioned against the flying of the Union Flag on places other than Council headquarters.[43] The *McCreesh* decision implies however is that there is now an arguable case that doing so constitutes a breach of the Council's Equality Scheme.[44] An obligation on public authorities to run their facilities and functions in a manner which does not unduly constitute a significant chill factor to a section 75 group will be broadly

[39] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 4.9, emphasis in original.
[40] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 4.7.
[41] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 4.10.
[42] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 4.14.
[43] "...while it is acceptable and appropriate, in the Commission's view, for a local Council to fly the Union Flag at its Civic Headquarters, the rationale for its display at every Council location, facility and leisure centre would be questionable" Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment, A Guide for Employers and Employees', Equality Commission, October 2009, page 7.
[44] This could also be the case for flags flown on Council headquarters should they present a similar 'chill factor'. *McCreesh* makes clear that the facility in question is not exempt from the chill factor consideration merely because it is in an area predominantly used by one side of the community (paragraph 4.5).

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welcomed. However unless this is more tightly defined across a broader range of policies CAJ views risks of subjective interpretation. This is not least in the potential for 'chill factor' complaints become a vehicle for successful objections, including to minority rights initiatives themselves, based on prejudice or even mere association of something with the 'other side.' In our view the risks of subjective interpretation are however enhanced in relation to the 'good relations' limb of the duty.

As referenced above, rather than tying it to a specific definition and hence set of identifiable duties one approach is to give 'good relations' its literal and face value meaning. In effect this means 'good relations' is engaged by anything the 'other side' takes umbrage with. In our experience such good relations discourse does not tend to make reference to grievances of the representatives of ethnic minorities, and hence in practice is about the competing views of the representatives of unionism and nationalism. The approach which is reflected in the *McCreesh* investigation is similar to this position. The ECNI states that the good relations duty is 'certainly engaged' in the context of both a complaint by the Orange Order to the Council and that there has been 'much public discussion in the context of good relations and a shared future' which itself is seen as 'indicative of the potential for good relations to be damaged'.[45] The Commission concludes that the 'good relations' duty has been breached by the decision to maintain the McCreesh park name. The decision is however not entirely clear as to *how* and *what in particular* has breached the 'good relations' duty beyond stating that both equality and good relations duties had been breached as they had not been 'exercised in substance, with rigor and with an open mind.'[46]

As alluded to above the Commission did cite case law that elected representatives should be impartial and not show bias in decision making, and the decision states "In this particular case, the Council's decision appears to be based on Councillors views on the wishes of one section of a divided community rather than on how this decision will impact on good relations".[47] This indicates that a factor in the decision was the manner in which the decision only reflected the views of 'one section of a divided community'. Taking a step back from the specificities of the *McCreesh* park this particular statement itself could set a significant precedent as to how the Equality Commission interprets the duty. One of the findings of the CAJ *Unequal Relations* report was that the Commission itself, for example, in its advice on policies to promote the Irish language had cautioned *against* proposals on the grounds of real or perceived objections from unionism. This highlighted the risk of the good relations duty becoming a political veto. One interpretation of the *McCreesh* decision, in holding the process was flawed as it only paid regard to the views of one side of the community, is that it does implicitly imply that real or perceived objections from 'one section of a divided community' should no longer be sufficient in themselves to block rights-based policy initiatives.[48]

[45] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 4.5.
[46] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, paragraph 5.4.
[47] McCreesh Final Investigation Report, Paragraph 4.1.
[48] Such a change in approach is far from guaranteed as the research observed that there were significant inconsistencies in how the Commission advised on the implications of the 'good relations' duty in different policy areas. For example the research noted "Within the advice on flying the Union Flag the good relations duty is rarely mentioned. By contrast in advice on Irish language policy good relations considerations, which the ECNI

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The ECNI investigation decision does not however state how objections should be filtered to ensure that views based on intolerance or prejudice do not become the basis of policy. The absence of such safeguards increases the risk of the duty being used as a veto, including for equality and rights based initiatives.

The *McCreesh* jurisprudence on decision making on the wishes of one side of the community does present a further conundrum. Namely what public authorities do when different sections of a divided community take different positions. A Council could be caught in a situation whereby a decision either way could be challenged as having breached the good relations duty if they ultimately, regardless of having considered both options in substance, with rigor and an open mind, are left in circumstances where there is not an obvious third way with having to take a decision which will match one or the other positions and 'adversely impact' on the other. Overall the *McCreesh* decision highlights unless some parameters are put on how the 'good relations' duty is to be interpreted in impact assessments there is significant risk of subjectivity.

From an equalities perspective there is also the risk that undefined 'good relations' issues could become the focus of EQIAs and displace the bread and butter and more objectively defined equalities issues EQIAs were designed to address.

Defining 'good relations' in law, previous initiatives

Since the publication of T:BUC there have been initiatives at both Westminster and the Assembly to seek a definition of good relations on the face of legislation drawing on the formulation in Great Britain of 'tackling prejudice and promoting understanding'.

During the passage of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 at Westminster an amendment was tabled by Mark Durkan MP to define 'good relations'. There was support for the amendment at Westminster with the Shadow Minister stating the Labour Party were 'extremely sympathetic'. The UK Government stated however that whilst it did not oppose the amendment in principle the matter should be best dealt with by the devolved institutions.[49]

More recently the Northern Ireland Assembly had the opportunity to debate defining 'good relations' insofar as it related to the new community planning functions on local councils. The Minister, the SDLP's Mark H Durkan, stated on the official record (Hansard) that good relations in local government bill in the context of community planning:

> ...are intended to be interpreted in line with the definition of good relations that has been in legislation in Great Britain for a number of years under the Equality Act 2010

regards as an important consideration of language policy, are often prominent and decisive." (Unequal Relations, page 57.)

[49] UK Parliament Official Record (Hansard) Public Bill Committee, Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill Tuesday 16 July 2013, Column 33.

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as meaning across the grouping in section 75 and as primarily being about tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.[50]

The Minister went further by seeking to place this definition on the face of the legislation. With the exception of the Alliance Party, there was broad support from other political parties that the concept should be defined. The SDLP and Sinn Féin voted for the above definition to be placed on the face of the legislation after the debate. The Unionist parties, whilst not opposing a definition per se advocated for more work to be done on the wording (DUP), a 'proper, full and detailed debate' (NI21) or that the definition 'may be a bit narrow and a bit too focused' (UUP). In this context the amendment fell. The Alliance Party also called for wider discussion, expressed the view that they were not convinced there was a need for a definition, but also indicated that if there was one, it should be broader to encompass matters of 'reconciliation, integration or sharing'.[51] It may be therefore that we are finally moving towards defining the concept which dominates the T:BUC strategy.

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[50] Official Report (Hansard) Northern Ireland Assembly Further Consideration Stage (1 April 2014).
[51] Official Report (Hansard) Northern Ireland Assembly Further Consideration Stage (1 April 2014).

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Community Arts Partnership

Community Arts Partnership submission to the inquiry on Together Building a United Community

Introduction

1. In recent times Northern Irish society has exhibited both the best of intentions towards the creation of a shared, safe and inclusive society and the worst, with protests, on occasion violent, around flags and emblems, paramilitary activities in city centres, to a frightening rise in attacks, many directly intimidating, even physical, on people from an ethnic minority background. In Belfast racist attacks doubled in the space of a year from 2013 to 2014, this coinciding with inappropriate and offensive choices of language from our leading politicians; it might seem then that Northern Ireland is at any one time a few steps away from creating the potential for change just as much as it is ready to maintain high levels of division and conflict.

2. And yet survey research shows that people believe that a society free from segregation, from sectarianism, from racism, an inclusive society, a society of shared and safe spaces, a society that would welcome unity alongside cultural heterogeneity, is not only possible and desirable, it is in the process of being constructed.

3. The research commissioned by the Office of First and Deputy First Minister through the Economic and Social Research Council, suggests that the public perception is that Stormont is reaching the targets in developing shared spaces and a shared society and creating safer communities.

4. Seventy two per cent of people in 2012 expressed a preference for living in neighbourhoods of mixed religion. Six in ten people surveyed didn't feel that their community was a divided community. Forty six per cent of Catholics said they would feel safe going to an event in a nearby town if it was in an Orange Hall with a similar result on Protestant side if going to a GAA club. (ESRC)

5. In terms of shared space, seventy four % of Protestants and seventy eight per cent of Catholics wanted the removal of Peace Lines either immediately or soon. (ESRC on Peace Lines)

6. Beyond that there are high levels of support for integrated education, some surveys suggesting support as high as seventy four per cent. (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)

7. We can see the potential, the future vision arguably most notably in the arts, when 50, 000 people (and tens of thousands more throughout Northern Ireland) come together to attend Culture Night, sampling all manner of cultural expressions without any sense of being excluded or of one's cultural identity being belittled or violated, or the hundreds of thousands in attendance during Derry/Londonderry's City of Culture Arts extravaganza, where new connections between communities were made by bridges built through artistic practice, or the sense of connectedness, even pride for the emerging film and television industry, or the success of Northern Ireland's writers, poets, actors, artists and filmmakers portrayed mostly as symbols of universal acclaim rather than any particular communal connection.

8. Probably even more evident is the ever increasing use of arts and artistic activity to look closely, to reflect upon where our society has been and where it might be steered in the future, the reimaging of communities, the search for inclusive symbolism and language.

9. In the face of potential polar orientations, the "Together Building a United Community" from our perspective appears at once ambitious, strident and all encompassing, from the building

blocks of anti-sectarian education introduced through cross community "buddy" systems as early as nursery school, through educators trained in educative practices which engender the sharing of our previously contested space, to the eradication of divisive symbols and the demolition of all 54 peace walls a decade from now.

10. There is an element of the New Lanark, of a new Utopian type of society, a society as we wish it to be, free from segregation, division and conflict, and yet "The Strategy" might also appear too narrow, trapped in the binary of our indigenous cultures not fully cognisant of the new emerging Northern Ireland, the "new arrivals" now a decade into their residency, still not fully integrated, still not mainstreamed, and so there are new interfaces, new cultural expressions, requiring new reflections and perhaps, and the Community Arts Partnership would suggest that there is a role for community arts practices at this juncture to establish new, more suitable approaches to integration and cohesion.

The situation as we now find it

11. Firstly though we have to assess the situation as we now find it. We live, as The Strategy document suggests, in difficult and challenging times economically. There are substantial stresses and strains on the arena of public financing.

12. Those challenges may have just been made all the more difficult with the recent announcements of a raft of reductions in funds available for expenditure on local public services. Not least affected are the Arts in general and Community Arts in particular experiencing already a 5% in year cut to exchequer funding and facing an 11% cut in the coming year.

13. As we all know the cuts impact almost universally in terms of departments and services and are heavily weighted against those most marginalised already living with high levels of deprivation prior to the funding cuts.

14. Again there may be required some moments of reflection regarding just how the future might be progressed if the financial wherewithal is not forthcoming.

15. It would be reasonable to suggest that increased financial tensions, poverty resulting from cuts to public spending could impact attitudes regarding sectarianism and racism.

16. The "Together, Building a United Community" is predicated on finances being made available for the key building blocks of the strategy - the creation of the United Youth programme with 10,000 places, the ten shared educational spaces, the building of "urban villages", the interface barrier support package, the demolition of peace walls, the new shared housing schemes, the support networks of educators, the shared summer schools, and the varied and various other elements of the strategy. Without funds what happens to The Strategy and beyond that what capacity to contribute Community Arts Partnership's expertise in building good relations, working in interface areas, working in intergenerational and intercultural settings, all being put under threat by withdrawal of financing.

17. Equally worthy of attention is the linkage between where we are now, the strategy document is watermarked by the period in which it was written, so suggestions that much progress has been made with stable political structures, sectarian attacks in abeyance, in some cases at alltime lows and racism and racist attacks lessening, seem a little off, perhaps even wide of the mark. As previously stated hate crimes in general have risen over the past period with the PSNI most notably documenting the meteoric rise in racist attacks and identifying particular paramilitary groupings as ring-leaders.

18. Nevertheless, despite the economic difficulties and the worsening of the sociological situation, there is still enough evidence of sentiment for a shared, safe and inclusive future that Community Arts Partnership, in harmony with the central aims of the Together Building a United Community strategy, works in all avenues whether in delivery, support of, research and advocacy for community arts practices towards a shared, safe and unsegregated society and

in so doing welcomes the inquiry into the "Together Building a United Community" strategy document put forward by the Office of First and Deputy First Minister.

19. In this submission Community Arts Partnership will outline the primary elements of the organisation, the activities we undertake, the impact of those activities, the learning associated from them, paying particular attention to our work in intercultural relations, where our PICAS project is ground-breaking in the mainstreaming of ethnic minority artists, melding ethnic minority cultural identity with the various cultures and identities locally to create potentially a unified expression of culture, an interculturalisation of Northern Irish society.

20. Community Arts Partnership sees potential for a community arts based exploration in areas of civic engagement. If Together Building a United Community is to be realised then connectedness to and ownership of this project would need to be felt fully in all our communities with particular emphasis on the most marginalised economically and those discriminated against on the basis of social or sexual orientation or disability.

21. Perhaps at this juncture the recent experience in Scotland and the unprecedented levels of engagement both socially and politically created through community discussions around not only the question of Scottish independence but what that independence would consist of may have lessons to teach us for periods of transition.

22. Some evidence of the shift in Scottish political engagement can be found at the links below.

http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/tfn-blogs/management/a-new-politics-anew- democracy-and-a-new-scotland

http://www.scvo.org.uk/scvo-news/scvo-stuc-nus-scotland-joint-indyrefstatement- people-must-lead-what-comes-next/

23. Community Arts Partnership would suggest also that Together Building a United Community requires a re-examination of theories and explanations of Sectarianism. The theoretical exposition on offer in Together Building a United Community seems less robust than it needs to be, suggesting that sectarianism is purely contained within the habits and actions of individuals, referring little to historical orientations, institutions or political frameworks.

http://rightsni.org/2014/05/sectarianism-in-northern-ireland-time-for-adefinition- in-law/

http://statecrime.org/data/uploads/2011/10/rolston2007c.pdf

24. We would stress the need to revisit definitions in order to facilitate the delinking and uncoupling of our binary cultural model which while replicated and reinforced through our institutions, political make-up, our schools and estates, won't be easily transcended by the creation of islands of sanctuary as proposed in the strategy document.

25. Finally Community Arts Partnership might examine the need for the arts in general and community arts in particular to be integral to the process of social change. The Strategy document does allude to this but Community Arts Partnership would suggest some finessing of The Strategy to incorporate the utility of the processes of community arts practice

Community Arts Partnership

26. Our organisation, the Community Arts Partnership is the lead organisation in the promotion, development and delivery of community arts practice in Northern Ireland.

27. The organisation has a two-fold approach to arts development: firstly, supporting access and participation by seeking to affect policy through advocacy and leadership and secondly, promoting authorship and ownership through the active engagement in projects and programmes.

28. Our mission is to take the lead in the promotion, development and delivery of community arts practice, to affect positive change.

29. Our vision is to see the emergence of a just, inclusive, peaceful and creative society, where difference is welcomed and participation is valued.

30. That the work delivered by Community Arts Partnership whether through our on the ground projects, our advocacy, our intercultural and cross community work, our research or our support given to local communities is at core about creating the capacity for change through creatively engaged citizenry.

31. Community Arts Partnership supports, promotes and advocates for community arts To promote participation in and enjoyment of the arts across all sections of society through a high quality inclusive arts programme to affect positive change

32. CAP engages in high level, strategic community and good relations work as well as promoting shared and safe spaces

33. Being one of 20 organisations engaging with CRC on the Racial Equality Strategy

34. Representing cultural support for marginalised groups within the CAL Inquiry into access to the arts for the working class.

35. Northern Ireland's only dedicated arts support programme for BME communities, Programme for Intercultural Arts Support (PICA

36. Community Arts Partnership's foundations are based upon the following definition,

"Community art is a process of harnessing the transformative power of original artistic expression and producing a range of outcomes: social, cultural and environmental. Looked at politically, socially, culturally and/or economically, community arts aim to establish and maximise inclusive ways of working, providing an opportunity for communities and their participants to continue to find ways to develop their own skills as artists and for artists to explore ways of transferring those skills. Through this process, community arts aim to maximise the access, participation, authorship and ownership in collective arts practice"

37. Put simply, community arts practice develops original creative thinking, activity and outcomes to affect positive change.

38. Community Arts Partnership is principally and primarily an arts organisation. Whilst much of the work that we do has secondary, instrumental impact, at the core of our programme of workshop-based projects and advocacy for the transformative power of the arts, lies a belief in the intrinsic value of arts and creativity; arts for art's sake.

39. This intrinsic core is not only the preserve of genius producers and great artists but is present in every original thought turned to creative action. How one harnesses that intrinsic power commutes to instrumental impact. Commentators including John Holden recognise other characteristics and attributes that can be exploited by the arts, in our cultural value system.

40. Beyond the intrinsic and the instrumental, the arts can reflect and support a political state's core expressions of identity and creativity, providing civic leadership and cultural security.

41. Therefore this institutional value can attach to the arts as well. A triangulation, from the intrinsic to the instrumental and the institutional offer us a model that can help describe the multifaceted role that the arts can play in our society.

42. Community Arts Partnership develops and delivers a core arts workshop programme consisting of a wide range of inspirational participant-led workshops which are offered to community groups, and primary, postprimary and special school students in N Ireland, with

a focus on those marginalised for a variety of circumstances - social, economic, cultural, personal.

43. Our Arts programme brings together organisations and individuals on projects which: are developed and delivered at very high standards; are rooted in the local community and are responsive to local needs and interests; develop and empower individuals and communities; target delivery within disadvantaged communities, contributing to the social, economic and cultural regeneration of our society.

44. Our Arts programme contributes to social cohesion by providing a platform for cultural dialogue and understanding within and across communities, and addressing social issues, including racism, sectarianism and discrimination.

45. Our Arts Programme promotes participation in the arts to individuals and groups of different abilities, traditions, ethnicities, backgrounds, age and sexual orientation; expands opportunities to experience the arts by bringing the arts to community /public spaces; advances the role of local artists in the community as contributors to personal and community selfesteem and empowerment; support artists by providing employment and development opportunities; encourage partnership working and collaborations among and between arts, educational, voluntary and statutory organisations and aims to integrate and complement schools and community groups' activities, resources and services; have a regionwide dimension. The programme consists of different main strands which encompass visual, performing and verbal arts, traditional and digital media, and fashion.

46. All workshops across different programme strands are facilitated by professional artists with expertise in a spectrum of disciplines and a wealth of experience in working with community groups and schools. Artists act as 'catalysts' throughout the projects to enable participants to express their full creative potential. Our core workshop programme is highly in demand among community organisations and schools, which have prised our innovative and creative approaches to personal and community development, and the professionalism of its facilitators.

47. We have been able to offer a core workshop programme to community organisations and schools free of charge thanks to the support of public funders.

48. In the past year our programme has engaged over 4,900 participants from at least 54 community organisations and 34 schools in workshop activity and we have assisted another 6,000 individuals and organisations through our information and advocacy services.

49. Our website traffic is substantial, close to three quarters of a million site hits annually.

50. Our Community Arts Weekly bulletin, the primary source for information regarding artistic activity generally and community arts in particular has a mailing list of over 3000 people and a readership many time that figure.

Community Arts Partnership's Projects

51. Landmarks (formerly Belfast Wheel) is a visual arts / art in public project. Participants are encouraged to produce pieces of work which can express their views of the world and/or have a particular resonance to their own community or the area where they live. Participants are also offered the opportunity to work with other groups from different communities / areas to create a joint piece of art inspired by a theme relevant to them all. Joint pieces produced in the past included two large scale sculptures: Belfast Wheel in King William Park (Belfast) and Century Citizen and Belfast Bloom to be installed in Jubilee Gardens and Botanic Gardens respectively, and The Sails mosaics on the front of Cotton Court building in Waring Street (Belfast).

52. Masque is a carnival arts project, it now also incorporates all forms of performance related activities such as dance, drama, costume and mask making, stage make-up, and set and

float building. Whilst the project provides cross-city links for large-scale performance events, groups can choose to focus on smaller community based performances, or experiment with different art forms without necessary working towards a final piece. Works created through Masque have been showcased in carnivals and festivals in Belfast, Derry, and Sligo.

53. Poetry in Motion Schools has since 2000 had more than 13,000 students taking part in this project, and the project has published over 2,000 poems. Poetry in Motion for Schools aims to develop the creative abilities of young people and enable their poetic voice through language and image. We achieve this through workshops conducted in schools by published/ producing poets. These facilitators have a wealth of experience in working with young people, helping to foster creativity via the spoken and written word. Schools that have taken part in this project see it as an enriching experience for both pupils and teachers and find that it also forges many links with the curriculum and supports wider learning. Our innovative projects send out a clear message that poetry is alive and well and capable of progressing with the fast changing landscape of language, technology and cultural innovation.

54. Poetry in Motion Community is a poetry project for local writers / aspiring writers. The programme focuses on practical outcomes and transferable skills. Poetry in Motion Community not only encourages writers to write, but assists them in learning how to edit, plan, schedule, choose illustrations, market themselves, negotiate with others and speak publicly. Poetry is at the core of the programme's activities, but additional projects are facilitated in any medium that involves creative engagement with text and/or performance skills. The work of local poets and writers has been promoted and brought to the general public through several publications and over 100 poetry performances, including BBC Radio 4 Poetry Slam – All Ireland Heat (2009). This year we incorporated the Seamus Heaney Award for New Writing a new award connected to our practice and orientated towards our practitioners as well as being open to the wider poetry community.

55. Side by Side works in parallel with other programme strands and offers workshops in a variety of art forms. Side by Side integrates groups of people with disabilities, the elderly and ethnic minorities with the ablebodied, and individuals of different ages and backgrounds, thus extending the reach of arts-based workshops and providing a supervised setting for new relationships to be built between groups. This offers the opportunity for the arts to be practiced by individuals within a mixed learning and physical ability, skill base and different social background, allowing creativity to inspire all.

56. Trash Fashion is an eco-aware clothing design project which uses recycled clothes and materials as the basis for re-branding and re-making items in whatever creative style the participants wish. This innovative project encourages participants to slash, shred, stencil, embroider, embellish, print and dye, deconstruct and metamorphose second hand clothing, to create a unique look. Workshops educate participants about recycling, sourcing eco-friendly materials, the historical connection to textile production in Belfast, and provide them with the freedom of creative expression. Workshops also give them the opportunity to showcase their original outfits and celebrate their achievements in a professionally staged fashion show.

57. This is Me is a multi-media exploration of identity project. Working across different media including video, photography, animation and music, This Is Me seeks to tell stories that inhabit our communities within their history and identity. Stories are told and listened to, and in so doing new skills and higher levels of confidence are gained, a fresh understanding and communication is created between individuals, communities and the wider world. This is Me workshops provide hands on-artistic creativity and community owned art through digital images and sounds to accompany the stories of our existence.

58. PICAS - The Programme for InterCultural Arts Support (PICAS) is a new CAP programme offering a range of opportunities to support the delivery of key areas of the Arts Council Intercultural Arts Strategy. The Purpose of the programme is to encourage and foster initiatives in the intercultural arts arena. This two year programme has been designed to assist communities and individuals, artists and activists to support theIntercultural Arts

Strategy. The PICAS programme offers a range of different supports to so-called indigenous working-class communities and new communities. In seeking to facilitate greater intercultural understanding, supporting communities, individuals and arts professionals to maximise their impact in an intercultural setting, Community Arts Partnership has developed a range of initiatives. PICAS has networking opportunities training programmes artists support creative programs funding clinics and mentoring opportunities to promote the widest possible impact for new, established and marginalised communities.

59. This year by SOAS, 60 per cent of all CAP community projects are conducted in areas of deprivation, falling in the highest quintile of need. The remaining 40% of participation centres on those marginalisedprimarily through disability, minority ethnic status, vulnerable adult status and are described as section 75 groups as per ACNI procedures. Of the schools programme, 19 schools of 30 across N Ireland, this year, are located in areas in the highest 50% of deprivation. Again, special schools taking part are in the main located in less deprived areas. By electoral area, the percentage is 90% for the community programme alone.

60. Community Arts Partnership, since 2011, has offered a balanced programme right across Northern Ireland. We support community groups and schools in taking what is off on their first steps on an artistic journey. Our programs are available currently in every county; across every age group; in schools, community centres, church halls local community development offices, libraries et cetera.

The potential of Community Arts Practice

61. Community art is a process of harnessing the transformative power of original artistic expression and producing a range of outcomes: social, cultural and environmental. Looked at politically, socially, culturally and/or economically, community arts aim to establish and maximise inclusive ways of working, providing an opportunity for communities and their participants to continue to find ways to develop their own skills as artists and for artists to explore ways of transferring those skills. Through this process, community arts aim to maximise the access, participation, authorship and ownership in collective arts practice.

62. This definition enables community organisations and CAP to frame our partnered practice within a local context as well as providing community arts practitioners with models of good practice. At the centre of this definition is the principle of partnership and inclusivity which places an emphasis on the role of participants within a project in defining both the artistic processes and end product shaped within a context of access, positive contribution and participation. This provides communities wishing to explore local, personal, social and community relations issues with the creative means to pursue their ambitions, and embodies the values of dignity and respect, autonomy, justice and equality and safe, effective, person-centred care as outlined above.

63. Therefore, Community Arts practice has a great many of the same aims and objectives as Community Relations or Good Relations Work, the methods used and the outputs may be very different but the outcomes can be similar.

64. Both aim to bring positive transformation to society through a greater number of people positively and actively engaging in their own neighbourhoods. Community Arts can be the vehicle for individuals to start the journey of transformation through creatively introducing the themes of Community Relations and ensuring they are central within the Community Arts process during the several weeks the group(s) come together and meet.

65. Training of community arts facilitators alongside community workers is key within this process as both groups bring their areas of expertise and knowledge. It also means that there are standards and expectations set by group leaders and CAP facilitators that are well communicated and upheld throughout the partnership process. The training also means that community workers have a greater role within the process and the community relations principles.

66. The merging of Community Relations principles and practice with Community Arts principles and practice has not been done in this intentional way before in Northern Ireland meaning that we are clearly addressing a gap in provision.

67. Also, in reviewing our consultations with groups and schools, 100% of the schools that have applied over the last three years expressed a desire to be supported in inter-community arts processes. In fact, in 14 years of Poetry In Motions Schools, every applicant has affirmed their wish to take part in a cross-community programme. Bearing in mind that we are always over-subscribed for these projects, it is evident that there is a real desire to do this work and a dearth of opportunity to actually take part. Of 387 groups and schools that have applied since 2011-12, just over 76% have asked to be considered for cross-community arts workshop programmes.

68. In view of T:BUC and the regard therein to interculturalism, we are taking the lead in applying this practice to an arts setting. We offer the only intercultural arts support programme underpinning a recognised Strategy. That strategy, The Arts Council of Northern Ireland Intercultural Arts Strategy, has a Steering Group made up of various representatives of groups and organisations, including Jacqueline Irwin from the Community Relations Council.

69. Whilst some may talk of a "culture war", we prefer to look at the fault line and inherent potential friction as perhaps offering a dynamic backdrop to creative exploration. We assert that beyond developing mere tolerances of extant cultural diversity in our small region, we should be striving to create and hybridise new opportunities and culturally shared and significant moments.

70. Creating community alternatives, sensitively crafted, wedded to identity but allowing for new formation to emerge is key to our innovative dynamic approach. The first community arts reader, which will published by CAP next year, framing the ethno-political dynamism of Interculturalism in the context of community arts practice in the so-called "Race Hate Capitol of Europe" , will mark a significant moment for arts practice and community relations.

71. This interculturalisation via community arts practice, asserts the need to guide specific cultural interactions with the aim of making them fair and equal, recognising a position that exist and proactively developing creative avenues to the discovery of new shared outcomes and formations. This unique operation of community arts practice, insisting on original arts creation (not recreation or decoration), affords us this potential for new paradigms of community relations activity. We would say that the development of Landmarks of sculpture, of performance, of publication and of practice, point us beyond the merely tolerating into the fusion of identities and perspectives that only the creative arts, properly and sensitively managed and processed, can deliver.

72. The term interculturalism generally indicates a set of perspectives and attitudes aimed at "promoting an open and dynamic interaction and exchange between different cultures and is not limited to defending the right to their co-existence within a determined space" (Comedia Network, n. d, p. 1). Féral (1996) argues that interculturalism develops "something deeper and more interesting than multiculturalism: the idea of a mutual friction of cultures, an interaction, an exchange between cultures" (p. 1). There are three particular intercultural actions: borrowing, exchange and hybridisation. The Council of Europe in 2008 has supported this area of emerging process: Council of Europe, 2008 - definition.

73. Cohesion of Culturally Diverse Societies "Intercultural dialogue is understood as a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It requires the freedom and ability to express oneself, as well as the willingness and capacity to listen to the views of others. Intercultural dialogue contributes to political, social, cultural and economic integration and the cohesion of culturally diverse societies."

74. Given that the NI Assembly's T:BUC Strategy, as contained in earlier elements of this application, has indicated a willingness to support Interculturalism, we would like to champion that process locally andrepresent an excellent opportunity to do so given the evidential demand by groups and schools expressing interest in our programmes.

75. To paraphrase the Dutch academic Ria Lavrijsen "The value of art, lies perhaps in the fact that art is constantly offering test cases in which a culture can prove it is serious about pluralism."

76. Comedia Network (n. d) Interculturalism. Retrieved March 12, 2004, pp. 4, from

http://www.comedianetwork.org/glossary/worddescription.php?url_wordid=6#top

77. Féral, J. (1996) Pluralism in art or interculturalism? Retrieved March 12, 2004, pp. 10, from

http://kvc.minbuza.nl/uk/archive/amsterdam/ukverslag_feral.html

78. John Foote talks of :"at least three types of dialogue: a dialogue between people of different cultures often but not always enclosed within national boundaries, a dialogue based on attitudes of non-violence, openness to others and a willingness to see solutions, and cooperation facilitated or occasioned by the dialogue" (Fred Bourguin 2003)

http://www.ericarts.org/web/files/131/en/intercultural_dialogue_johnfoote.pdf

79. And Nausikaa Schirilla, in her 2008 article Contribution to Conflict Transformation says "The conception of intercultural dialogue is in a certain sense a contribution to conflict transformation, as many conflicts have a cultural dimension or are touching cultural problems." (Source: "Intercultural Dialogue and Conflict Transformation: A Feminist Perspective")

80. Whilst a lot of work has been evidenced on areas of competing national identities elsewhere in Europe and beyond, the core problematic at this centre of Northern Ireland experience is this reflection of national and ethnographic identity in opposition to another. By mainstreaming our cross-community practice to allow for true intercultural making, we are allowing creative expression to be a key agent of change and mutual understanding and interdependent developments.

81. On the basis of reorientation of thinking around the question of Interculturalism it would be appropriate here to explore Community Arts Partnership's thinking regarding Sectarianism.

82. http://statecrime.org/data/uploads/2011/10/rolston2007c.pdf

http://rightsni.org/2014/05/sectarianism-in-northern-ireland-time-for-adefinition-in-law/

Conclusion

83. It would be a reasonable to suggest that "Together Building a United Community" recognises that the United Community will not be created overnight – as is recognised in the strategy document, a period of around a decade is envisioned.

84. The operationalisation of the Together Building a United Community strategy therefore requires a transition period where citizens can engage with the key ideas, can participate in reflection regarding the past and gravitate meaningfully towards the future.

85. It is in that transition period that the contribution from the processes of community arts practice would be a necessary and vital component in terms of aiding the transition.

Community Relations Council

Community Relations Council

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

Submission to the Committee of OFMDFM inquiry into Building a United Community

10 October 2014

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Appendix 1 CRC supported work

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Executive summary

CRC welcomes this opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community. It is especially poignant at this particular juncture in our peace process when there is a sense that Northern Irish society is at a crossroads, with an urgent need for agreed government commitments and actions to stabilise and reconfigure existing tensions.

It is critical that the Executive's strategy Together Building a United Community (TBUC) is developed as a new and progressive discourse, with innovative and ambitious actions that will continue to address the legacy of the past and assist in building a shared and reconciled society.

Key for CRC is the aim of the inquiry which is to '*inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism and racism and other forms of intolerance"*

CRC highlights the following key points as issues which should be given full attention by the Committee during its deliberations. These and other issues will be further elaborated upon within the body of our response:

- **Delays in implementation.** It is over a year and a half since the policy was first announced but there is little activity on the ground.
- **Financial implications.** There are serious financial implications with the loss/reduction of international funders and the constrictive domestic funding situation.
- **Local Government.** There is a need to ensure that the new 11 District Councils have equality and good relations at the forefront of everything they do.
- **Regional Co-ordination.** Regional co-ordination of community relations work is required, which should bring together and synchronize interventions at regional government level along with district councils and community initiatives.
- **Sectarianism and Racism.** Sectarianism and racism should be tackled in an effective and co-ordinated way. This is particularly important bearing in mind budget restraints imposed on Departments and their agencies which may impact negatively on tackling sectarianism and racism (for example, recent concerns expressed by PSNI around the negative impact of budget cuts in relation to policing interface areas).

CRC welcomes the September 2014 announcement by Northern Ireland Secretary of State Theresa Villiers, on the convening of a new round of cross-party negotiations to focus on the outstanding issues, including how to deal with flags, parades and the past and wishes it success in addressing these outstanding legacy issues which continue to impact on community relations and resources.

CRC also acknowledges the important role the Committee of OFMDFM has in relation to scrutiny, policy development and consultation with respect to OFMDFM and its key role in the consideration and development of legislation. In order to ensure a robust and transparent inquiry process, CRC recommends that the Committee:

- Make inquiry submissions publicly available.
- Enlist the services of dedicated advisors to the inquiry.
- Call for evidence from all relevant departments regarding spend to date and future resourcing for the implementation of the United Community strategy priority areas, headline actions and community relations issues with no headline action attributed e.g. the regeneration of interface areas, flags/emblems, parades/protests and other legacy issues.
- Make recommendations to other Departments as part of the final inquiry report.
- Pro-actively engage with the sector on issues emerging from inquiry submissions through thematic and organisational events during the autumn and winter.
- Involve practitioners in the writing of the next version/update.
- Post-inquiry, make a commitment to engage with relevant cross-departmental officials on the Inquiry's Report i.e. recommendation for an ongoing examination on the impact of the Inquiry on policy/programme change. This would be invaluable to those interested in the implementation and delivery of TBUC.

CRC hopes that the learning and recommendations from the Inquiry submissions will be embedded in the ongoing TBUC planning and implementation processes and future plans so that peace building, countering sectarianism and racism and supporting reconciliation will be at TBUC's core.

One of CRC's areas of responsibility is the provision of practical and policy development and funding support to a broad network of statutory, private, and voluntary/community sector organisations. The Inquiry has provided an invaluable opportunity to revisit TBUC with these organisations. Hence during September CRC facilitated a wide ranging discussion with the sector in relation to the Inquiry and its terms of reference, as well as broader issues that are affecting the groups on the ground. CRC's response has captured some of this discourse and we would like to offer assistance to the Committee in the coordination of evidence gathering events with the sector – this direct engagement with those doing 'relationship building' on the ground would be significant as well as symbolic.

CRC, as the regional body would particularly welcome the opportunity to give evidence directly to the Committee over the coming months – it would be important to have this regional perspective.

Finally, CRC wish the Committee success in highlighting a clear vision for the development and delivery of TBUC to build cohesive, strong relationships across all levels of society, protect minorities and demonstrate fairness that inspires trust in the strategy.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

The Community Relations Council (CRC)[1] is the regional body for community relations in Northern Ireland, established as an independent charity and acting as an arm's length body through sponsorship by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM). The board is appointed through a supervised public appointments process and the Memorandum and Articles provides for up to one third of the Board to be appointed by the Government.

CRC's vision is of a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society founded on the achievement of reconciliation, equality, co-operation, respect, mutual trust and good relations, of an open society free from intimidation and threat, where peace and tolerance are considered normal.

To support the securing and attainment of this vision CRC's responsibilities as a regional body are:

- advocating and challenging progress towards a better, shared and prosperous inter-community partnership and inter-cultural co-operation;
- increasing awareness of community relations work and encouraging the flow of ideas and practice on North-South, East-West, European and international levels through commissioning and undertaking research;
- developing, supporting and disseminating best practice examples of peace-building and facilitating constructive debate on difficult, sensitive and controversial topics, whilst acknowledging and promoting good relations actions;
- providing support for local groups and organisations (finance, training, advice and information) to develop opportunities for cross-community understanding;
- providing practical opportunities for inter-community and inter-cultural partnership understanding and interventions; and
- assisting central and local Government in the development, implementation, and delivery of policies, programmes and actions by connecting community relations issues through learning from research and programmes at regional, sub-regional and local level.

Since its establishment in 1990 CRC has supported practical initiatives underpinning progress towards a society whose principles are fairness and justice, the peaceful celebration of variety and difference, and the importance of sharing, trust and inclusion. CRC supports cross-community partnerships and co-operation, inter and intra community dialogue, and sustained engagement; in addition to this CRC promotes better practice and aims to influence policy development processes. As the regional body for peace building, CRC acts as an independent voice championing change to achieve and maintain a shared and open society based on fairness, the celebration of diversity and variety, and genuine reconciliation and interdependence.

[1] CRC was formed in January 1990 with the purpose of supporting and promoting community relations work at all levels within the community, a role which it continues to carry out. It originated from a proposal of a research report commissioned by the NI Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights titled 'Improving Community Relations' (Frazer & Fitzduff 1986).

Furthermore, CRC provides a challenge function that promotes a shared and better future throughout government and civic society. The consultation responses to *A Shared Future* clearly indicated that there was widespread support for such a regional body, independent of government and capable of commanding support to promote good relations throughout government and society, support organisations through funding, training and development of good practice and to provide a challenge function across the public sector and wider civic society through research, best practice and policy development

Context
Given CRC's central role in peace-building and relationship building in our post-conflict society we are particularly concerned with the formulation of strong, robust policy making that influences and supports best practice on the ground.

Before embarking on the specifics of OFMDFM's Inquiry into Building a United Community it is worth taking note of some of the key relevant commitments and reactions to our society's peace process.

In April 1998 the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement states in its first paragraphs that *'we make a fresh start in which we firmly dedicate ourselves to the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and to the protection and vindication of the human rights of all.'* It further states *'we are committed to partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of relationships within Northern Ireland, between North and South, and between these islands'*. Then in October 2006 the St Andrews Agreement states that *'the culture rights and aspirations of all are respected and valued, free from sectarianism, racism and intolerance'.*

External expectations. There is a sense that Northern Irish society is at a crossroads in our peace process which requires agreed government commitments and actions to stabilise and reconfigure existing tensions. The Haass/O'Sullivan process failed to produce consensus or an agreed blueprint for dealing with some of the most contentious issues facing our post-conflict society. More recently, Nancy Soderberg[2], accused Northern Ireland politicians of an '*abysmal abdication of leadership*' and unionists and nationalists of being '*far too stuck in the past, making progress vulnerable and even reversible*'. This was echoed by Minister Flanagan at the British Irish Association Conference (September 2014) when he referred to the Irish Government's concerns over the past year '*as politics in Northern Ireland has atrophied across a range of issues; not only the reconciliation agenda, which goes to the heart of the peace process itself, but other bread and butter issues have also fallen foul of disagreement within the Executive'.* At the same meeting Secretary of State Theresa Villiers, reiterated strongly to political parties reluctant to move forward to creating a fresh approach on the past that *'there are risks but the status quo is increasingly unsustainable and is putting ever greater pressure on our policing and criminal justice system'.*

Scale of the challenge. Recognising the problem is a recurring theme across a number of policy development areas, and it is therefore important that the Committee in taking forward its inquiry, reflect on the realities and the problems still facing our

[2] Senior aide to former US president Bill Clinton

society as it moves from peace-building to reconciliation. CRC would like to draw specific attention to the most recent findings from the third *Peace Monitoring Report* (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Peace-Monitoring-Report-2014.pdf). Finally, CRC's core grant and community relations/cultural diversity grant schemes have suffered a decrease in budgets whilst witnessing an increase in applications. This is both symptomatic of the increased need to carry out the work, as well as the shrinking financial support for this work to take place i.e. exiting of Atlantic Philanthropies and International Fund for Ireland programmes as well as the gap between Peace III and Peace IV. The shrinking of the sector has the potential to impact negatively on peace-building activities.

Together Building a United Community strategy. It is critical that the Executive's strategy Together Building a United Community (TBUC) is developed as a new and progressive discourse, with innovative and ambitious actions that will continue to address the legacy of the past and assist in building a shared and reconciled society. CRC welcomed the launch of TBUC in May 2013 stating that, given that the details of implementation plans and budgets had still to be formulated it viewed the document as a statement of policy intent and would consider it further as these details unfolded.

It is well over a year since TBUC was issued and CRC welcomes this opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community. Key for CRC is the purpose of the inquiry to '*inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism and racism and other forms of intolerance" .*

CRC views this inquiry as hugely important at this particular juncture in our peace process.

SECTION 2 TBUC MUST BE AMBITIOUS AND FIT FOR PURPOSE

The TBUC strategy must match the ambition of wider civil society to live in a truly and fully reconciled region. It is a critical strategy within the NI peace process which must work in practice and not just in theory.

The successful development and implementation of TBUC depends on:

- ***Having a clear framework*** for departmental structures around the development and delivery of TBUC's four priorities and seven headline actions and how these will work, both individually and collectively.
- ***Producing a meaningful assessment*** of the scale of the challenge to help inform TBUC actions and programmes. This includes assessing inter and intra communal violence which continues to impact on people's lives, security budgets and the peace process. Some of this information can be found in CRC publications such as the *Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Reports* which provide a dispassionate analysis of the dynamics within NI society. The reports have been welcomed as an important source of information that allow us to examine, on the basis of evidence, our journey towards or away from peace on issues including security, equality, political progress and cohesion and sharing. The reports use statistics in the public domain but which have not been previously assembled across the wide range of issues affecting life here. The reports are available on CRC's website along with many other valuable research reports that underpin our knowledge of issues affecting community relations including CRC's Shared Space research journal (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/programmes/sub-page-1/shared-space/) which publishes current academic research on the themes of peace, conflict and community relations journal.
- ***Developing actions with clear and measurable outcomes****,* as well as indicators and interventions using appropriate evaluation tools. This will enable the Executive, its departments and related agencies to properly demonstrate what these programmes have achieved, especially in relation to sustained cross-community sharing and reconciliation.
- ***Being capable of addressing the complex mix of issues*** that link poverty with long-term social disadvantage such as housing, education, regeneration and community safety, which are inextricably linked to the more fluid issues of identity, cultural expression and community division.
- ***Ensuring TBUC will be funded.*** This is one of the most critical questions to be addressed by the inquiry. Exact detail is required on what expenditure has been committed and what is being sought to properly resource TBUC's commitment to tackle sectarianism and racism and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration.
- ***Reconciliation.*** The TBUC commitment to the *'desirability of good relations and reconciliation'* should be strengthened and reflected in subsequent actions. The PEACE III programme is based on a widely accepted definition of reconciliation developed by Hamber and Kelly for the PEACE II programme (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/dd/papers/dd04recondef.pdf) and agreed by the current Executive in 2007. This definition retains merit and credibility, and should be adopted and re-affirmed as TBUC moves forward.

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The Executive must ensure all Departments work together to embed TBUC and not just as a strategy for certain executive partners. TBUC must influence and guide the entire Executive, along with its Section 75 obligations, to make a positive contribution to reconciliation and peace- building. This should involve processes to review existing and new policies through a TBUC lens and civil servants engaged in writing and delivering TBUC should be given training to assist them in their understanding of the issues and engaging with the sector. Ministers should also ensure that TBUC is not only delivered but strongly advocated for across the entire Executive.

- ***Joined up government.*** The importance of inter-departmental co-operation can only be resolved through political commitment and Executive agreement. What is clear however, is that no serious issue in building a united community can be tackled by one Department alone working in a silo. For example:
    - significant change in the pattern of housing will require changes in safety, policing, transport, education and the location of public services;
    - shared space will require actions by the Departments of Social Development, Regional Development, Culture and Leisure, Education, and Justice, as well as local government;
    - there will be no change on the interfaces if there are not changes in planning, regeneration, transport, employment and education;
    - tackling the past will involve actions for justice, education, health, employment and community relations; and
    - tackling hate crime and racial inequalities is clearly a matter of serious inter-departmental action.
- ***Practice shaping policy.*** The TBUC strategy was issued in May 2013 with practically no results to show on the ground due to the fact that it is mainly focused on departmental programme development and delivery, largely ignoring the vast inter-community infrastructure in the most volatile areas which has been built up over many years through major international investment. The sector now reports a current financial crisis and is concerned that it will be unable to contribute fully to the implementation of TBUC. At a recent meeting with sectoral stakeholders 92% stated that their community had not yet benefitted from TBUC programmes. The strategy must work to link more effectively with good practice on the ground.

In addition to the general comments above CRC has the following observations to make on the current design and implementation of TBUC.

Participation. A number of design teams, subgroups, working groups have been established to take forward actions, but the involvement of the sector within this design process has been limited. The positive example of the Interagency Group established by the Department of Justice to drive forward its commitment to interface barrier removal is an example of good practice within and between key stakeholder government agencies and community groups. However, it is unclear as to whether or not this process will be able to find adequate resources to fund the TBUC commitment of barrier removal by 2023. The 'United Youth Programme' design team has engaged widely with the youth sector, young people, and training organisations but these examples do not seem to have been replicated across the other actions. There is no clear sense as to how the other programmatic areas are being designed.

A commitment to engage strategically with the relevant knowledge base should be given and actioned across all headline action programmes during the remaining design period.

Implementation. Overall progress is slow. Aspects of programmes have emerged i.e. three shared campuses announced, two urban villages identified, the United Youth Programme is now moving to the selection of pilots. Other programmes still appear to be either in design mode or currently working up terms of reference to establish one. However, there is growing frustration at the delays.

Peace-building focus. Departments should also be more accountable in relation to the TBUC programmes for which they have responsibility in terms of their good relations content and impact. For example, the two urban villages programmes announced appear to have little or no good relations content and local minority communities appear to be excluded from the areas of benefit. TBUC also refers to a number of strategies relevant to Section 75 (1) categories e.g. Childcare and Gender Equality Strategy. It is important to clarify if these strategies will include peace-building as a core objective, CRC stresses the need to ensure that no government agency should be allowed to reinforce division.

Co-ordination. It is critical for the Executive to ensure Departments work together to deliver a joined up approach to TBUC. Each department should consider how it will:

- respond to community relations issues throughout its area of responsibility;
- work in partnership with other Departments and communities: and
- develop clear and transparent targets to assist in the delivery of TBUC priorities and measure progress.

Leadership. Strong Ministerial leadership is an important principle and Ministers should ensure that TBUC is not only delivered but also advocated for. To ensure a joined up inter-departmental approach to the strategy, leadership offered by the Executive should be efficient, effective and transparent. It should hold regular planned meetings and publish reports on progress which should be presented to OFMDFM Committee and circulated widely. To date there has only been one Ministerial Panel meeting.

Local Government reform. Councils should be supported in the development of strong reconciliation and funding programmes to strengthen and mainstream their significant contribution to peace which has been supported over many years by the European Peace Programmes and OFMDFM's Good Relations Funding.

Resources. TBUC will not be plausible without a serious resource review and the commitment of adequate resources. This includes urgent support for groups on the ground vital to implementing TBUC actions. A major rethink of how larger and significant budgets such as education, housing, community development, regeneration, justice and culture intersect and present opportunities for reconciliation and peace-building is also necessary. Without this review, commitment to reconciliation and peace building is likely to remain merely piecemeal.

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Outstanding contentious issues. It is difficult to know how the Haass/O'Sullivan Panel of Parties and the issues it was set up to address currently sit/fit within the TBUC framework as discussions on these matters are currently stuck. Therefore, the Executive must:

- break the impasse and provide stability by returning to fully engaging on the key outstanding issues of flags, parades and protests, marking anniversaries and how to deal with the past;
- find agreement on the overarching principles and structures to address them;
- engage with other key organsations with responsibility for, and expertise in peace building activity to help support and sustain progress.

At the September 2014 Conservative party conference the NI Secetary of State, Theresa Villiers, announced a fresh round of all-party talks, involving the Irish Government commenting *"It's essential that the institutions crafted so painstakingly in 1998 function effectively and efficiently. There can be no doubt that both welfare and the legacy issues of flags, parading and the past are now impacting on the ability of the Executive to do that. A situation where decision-making becomes deadlocked is not something we could simply sit back and allow to happen".*

In September 2013, the CRC submitted a briefing to the Panel of Parties established under TBUC (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/CRC-Haass-Submission.doc). The briefing acknowledged that the Panel of Parties was taking place at an important time in our peace process and gave analysis and comment on the issues of flags and related matters; parades and protests; dealing with the past. The submission also gave examples of the CRC's practical engagement with these issues:

1. **Agreement on overarching principles** – CRC believes that our society is reaching the limits of what can be achieved by pragmatic negotiation on a case by case basis. To move beyond the management of our difference to the acknowledgement of our diversity, CRC believes it is time to enshrine principles that form the basis of our collective rights and responsibilities to each other in relation to the remaining matters. These principles could form the foundation for the approach we take to these issues and could provide security for all identities without prejudice to the wider constitutional question.

2. **Structures for sustaining peace** – It can be as difficult to live within a peace settlement as it is to negotiate it in the first place. CRC believes that our society has underestimated the implications of this important point and that the negotiating structures for sustaining peace should be revisited. Tensions and divisions will remain within Northern Ireland for the foreseeable future and sporadically lead to violence and disturbances in the street. Acknowledging this is not to be fatalistic, indifferent or undemanding of our peace process. It is simply the reality of the difficulties of transforming a deeply divided society. Therefore we suggest that negotiations on the three key issues should consider whether the ad-hoc approach taken to these inevitable issues is, in itself, creating instability and an erosion of trust.

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SECTION 3 UNITING COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION, INCLUDING HOW COMMUNITIES ARE INVOLVED IN DECISION MAKING.

Acknowledging the sector. The unparalleled scale of international support and community effort for peace-building over the years and the pace of progress and learning from practice on the ground must be strongly reflected within the strategy.

This acquired practice must be a key influence on current priorities and actions, yet it appears for the most part, that communities and practitioners have played a minimal role in the actual design and delivery of TBUC to date. The strategy should commit to the principle that the achievements on the ground throughout the conflict and peace process are the bedrock of future progress and commit to ensuring there is no regression from current levels of inter-community activity and partnership.

The void between TBUC and community need, has left much of the community relations sector vulnerable, frustrated and pessimistic. Enormous efforts have gone into the task of making peace and seeking real and meaningful reconciliation on the ground. Many people and organisations took big risks for change even when reconciliation was dismissed as naive. They hold the expertise in and commitment to the delivery of relationship and trust building work. TBUC should include a programme of actions and resources which are authentic, credible and rooted in the learning from this work.

CRC was established to support these efforts and to build from their insights and achievements (examples of CRC supported projects can be found in appendix 1). International partners have also made a huge contribution to this change including the EU Peace fund, Atlantic Philanthropies, the International Fund for Ireland, the Irish Government and others that have invested in economic regeneration and reconciliation for many years and enabled the direct participation of hundreds of thousands of people in building peace. This broadly based support for a genuine people's 'peace process' sustained hope through years of political disagreement and difficulty and was vital to the ultimate possibility of political agreement.

Wider inclusion. TBUC must be stronger in its acknowledgement of:

- the positive contribution by people from minority ethnic backgrounds, and minority faith backgrounds;
- how segregation and legacy issues within society impacts on minority ethnic and faith communities; and
- the need for a strong link with the Racial Equality Strategy, or else we will lose complementarity.

Furthermore, a number of other categories or groupings receive a guarded mention in the strategy, rather than being viewed as important contributors to the vital work of peace-building e.g. women, NGO's, churches, faith-based organisations, ex-combatants, trade unions, private sector and business community, and finally those organisations working to develop and strengthen communities through a community development approach.

Resourcing the sector. Declining and inadequate funding, as well as delays associated with release of Government funding delivery is leading to a diminishing

and fractured sector. It is critical that government consider both current and long term consequences of a reduced sector, such as 'How can peace building work continue in the current climate where experienced staff and good projects have closed, or are at risk of closure?' and 'Who will be left to implement TBUC on the ground?'.

Future funding must move from piecemeal to long term community based activity based on hard indicators with results that are outcome based. The outcome of the Good Relations Funding Review should detail OFMDFM's commitment to sustainable, long-term resource allocation for community relations activity and CRC recommends that the Committee call for the publication and full consultation on the review findings as part of this inquiry.

Affirmation and inclusivity. There is growing concern regarding the genuine political commitment to the TBUC strategy. The Interface Community Partners group is made up of community relations practitioners from across the region, and at a recent meeting (July 2014) the group expressed deep concern at what they viewed as a potential emerging crisis over the coming period and called on the Executive to acknowledge the good practice on the ground and give due focus, support and leadership to peace-building activities on the ground. The voluntary/community sector and the communities for whom they work, have invested time, energy and reputation in the peace process and need to be reassured that the Executive will commit to the principle that the achievements throughout the conflict and peace process, is the bedrock of future progress and ensure that there is no regression from current levels of inter-community activity and partnership.

Additionally, the planning process that has started now to build on TBUC in the development of the next reconciliation and peace-building plan, must involve civic society in its planning and production.

In order to build confidence in the process, political and government representatives must exercise stronger influence and be more engaged in community relations issues at local and regional level to show that TBUC is being supported collectively by all political parties. Anything short of a united stance by the Executive places TBUC at an immediate disadvantage and the community cannot be expected to achieve a level of unity which is beyond the politicians.

Local Government reform also provides a golden opportunity to mainstream the work within all eleven council structures. In particular, area community planning within Councils should be harnessed as an effective tool to mainstream cohesion, sharing and integration into real decisions at local level.

Another potential method of providing confidence at local level and developing a united peace building approach is for regular cross party plenary surgeries within communities involving all of the political parties. This method has been successfully used by the Greater Whitewell Community Surgery group. Statutory organisations are already using the '*Collaborative Working in Disadvantaged Areas'* and '*Delivering Social Change'* frameworks to try to work together more effectively. Other models of good practice in community engagement could also be helpful in relation to engagement with the sector. For example CRC's commissioned research '*A*

Model of Consultation? Transformation and Regeneration at the Interface' (ICR September 2013) (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/A-Model-of-Consultation.pdf) identifies partnership, comprehensive preparations, creative and open community engagement; evidenced action; and thoughtful follow-up as the core elements that have made for successful consultations in Northern Ireland. A further example of how practice has influenced policy is CRC's publication '*From Conversation to Transformation – a journey of change at the interface'*. The pack is a helpful tool for those engaged in conflict transformation at local and international level and contains a set of publications (see list below) drawn together by CRC to help capture the work it has been leading in the development of a policy and practice framework for the transformation of interface barriers and the regeneration of interface areas:

A Model of Consultation? Transformation and Regeneration at the Interface ICR 2013 (link above)

Interface Community Partners seminar – Towards a United Community (November 2013) http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Interface-Community-Partners-Seminar-Towards-a-United-Community-November-2013.pdf

Interface Community Partners & Interagency Group Annual Conference (December 2013)http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Interface-Community-Partners-Interagency-Group-Annual-Conference-2013.pdf

The Interface Working Group – A Review ICR 2012 (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/IWG-review-with-exec-sumary-130313-final.doc)

Report on the Joint Conference of Interface Working Group and Interface Community Partners on City Interfaces CRC 2011 (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/crc-remembering-the-future.pdf)

Beyond Belfast – Contested Spaces in Urban, Rural and Cross Border Settings RCN & CRC 2010 (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/master-beyond-report-web.pdf)

Challenge of Change Conference CRC 2009 (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/IWG-Final-CoC-report.pdf)

Towards sustainable Security – Interface Barriers and the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast CRC 2008 (http://conflictresearch.org.uk/reports/sectarianism-segregation/CRC-Towards-Sustainable-Security.pdf)

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SECTION 4 EXAMINE THE THEORY AND PRACTICE WITH REGARD TO GOOD RELATIONS, SHARED SPACE AND SHARED SERVICES IN BRINGING DIVIDED COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

CRC comment on TBUC priority area: Our Shared Community

As an organisation responsible for the promotion of reconciliation and peace building, CRC believes it is critical to afford opportunities for interaction across all spheres of life. This involves enhancing and increasing access to public facilities and services regardless of their geographical location. In a society emerging from conflict this often means navigating a segregated landscape peppered with perceptions as to who the 'space' belongs too. Whilst much progress being made in opening up and maintaining public spaces as 'shared' it is important to continue a range of efforts across local and central government.
CRC has developed the following positions regarding shared space:

- Public resources and services should be of good quality, and should be equally welcoming, accessible and safe for all members of society;
- Shared space must be developed within a framework of economic and social relevance to town and city centres, access and arterial routes, retail centres, public services and housing estates;
- Shared spaces must be useful, well designed, thoughtfully located and managed;
- Regeneration can play a key role in the transformation of communities, particularly those that are in close proximity to physical barriers and interfaces;
- A systematic commitment is required to ensure that all future development maximises the openness of all resources, commits to shared public realm and integrates the concept of sharing into the planning and management of assets;
- Progress requires serious inter-departmental working. No commitment to this idea in practice will materialise without significant resources, determination and effort and a willingness to manage the difficulties;
- Achieving shared space will require actions from a range of Departments e.g. DSD - ensuring *city and town centre master-planning programmes* promote shared spaces and that physical development and public realm projects work to remove physical evidence of the conflict such as redundant security measures; and DRD developing guidance on strengthening community cohesion, fostering a stronger community spirit and the importance of city and town centres as shared spaces; and
- Communities are working hard to address barriers and to enable change - this progress must be supported and mentored and Inter agency/community initiatives must continue to be developed.

Housing. Housing is a critical matter for community relations. Housing in Northern Ireland touches on profound issues of territorial control, choice, freedom of movement and intimidation[3]. Intimidation and fear prevent and reduce housing choices, and also create an unequal and unfair reaction of the relocation of the victims of intimidation and discrimination. The continuation of the SPED programme

[3] In 2011 twenty-eight homes were purchased under the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwelling Scheme (SPE[3]), and between November 2010-October 2011 fourteen properties were purchased at a total cost of £2.898 million. Intimidation and fear prevent and reduce housing choices, and also create an unequal and unfair reaction of the relocation of the victims of intimidation and discrimination.

is a sharp reminder that the legacy of the past continues to impact negatively on people's lives, people's housing choice and the economies of housing provision. Therefore reducing fear and intimidation could enable greater housing choices in previously restricted areas, thereby contributing to efficiency savings in the current budgetary climate.

To address the legacy of housing patterns and choices requires a re-framing of public policy around a framework of equality and conflict-transformation. Equality in housing provision is of critical importance and CRC believes that the allocation of housing and the pattern of living together must be addressed so as to end effective segregation in public housing and the ongoing distortion of free choice through fear.

Progress has been made, yet the self-developing and maintenance of shared neighbourhoods has depended largely upon the level and effectiveness of local voluntary and community organisations in terms of offering support and leadership and commitment. CRC has endeavoured to assist those seeking to achieve this transformation.

In moving forward, the future long term direction for housing must fully acknowledge the difficulties facing our society, specifically the communal segregation of communities along religious and political demarcations.

Workplaces. The workplace has been paramount in the promotion of change in Northern Ireland. It is currently one of the few genuinely shared spaces where people mix as a matter of routine, and businesses and the trade unions are to be congratulated for their efforts. CRC has and continues to engage with the business sector and trade union movement and has offered support through a range of activities.

Community Development. Community development organisations and groups play an important role in creating shared resources, strong partnerships and networks within and between communities.

Developing the various aspects of a shared community requires broader thinking, encapsulating issues such as tackling poverty, regenerating communities and utilizing future opportunities under community planning to ensure positive developments for communities.

MOVING FORWARD

Shared Spaces/Regeneration/Social clauses. In order to maximise opportunities for creating shared spaces/community cohesion CRC has the following suggestions:

- Values such as open, welcoming, safe and accessible spaces should underpin the usage of all assets/facilities/services;
- Proposals for use of space located in 'contested spaces' should clearly demonstrate how they will contribute to the development and maintenance of community relations;
- Proposals emphasising shared ownership should demonstrate this within its governance arrangements e.g. competencies of the managing organisation should include a knowledge of community relations, as well as a willingness to promote and develop relations and partnerships;

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- Infrastructure that helps develop good relations partnerships should be supported;
- Local assets/facilities led by government agencies/community organisations should explore the opportunities to form partnership consortia which take advantage of the competence and capacity that has been built up by those involved in peace building activities via cross-community partnerships;
- Economic, social and environmental benefits should be shared by all in the area. Applications should clearly demonstrate what positive impact the transfer will have on the local community.

Housing. Given the post-conflict nature of Northern Ireland it is important to give further consideration as to how housing providers can meet objective need as well as making a positive contribution to better community relations. This could include the following:

- Examination of what shared housing looks like in a post-conflict society and how this moves forward in terms of equality, reconciliation and transformation;
- Housing Stock *s*hould be looked at in the context of the legacy of the past. There is a clear need to examine how *all* agencies can build confidence that enables consideration of all available housing and examine impact of communal chill factors;
- Proactively monitored reasons for accepting, reluctance or refusals specifically relating to communal issues e.g. spatial segregation, murals, flags or physical barriers - the collation of this data should be used to help inform the development of programmes/interventions which could be used to widen the geographic boundary of choice;
- Develop a set of indicators to measure change i.e. (a) demand for shared housing, (b) how shared housing is being supported and developed within a range of policy areas e.g. planning statements and how are designs being modified to maximise safety (c) what is the experience of living in a shared neighbourhood?
- Investigate short-term approaches that can measure the ability to meet objective need whilst also enabling more choice in housing provision;
- Shared communities supported in the context of increasing choice and promoting a shared and cohesive society i.e. could include the monitoring of trends, for example where intimation and exclusions occurs in Housing Executive estates, (albeit a significant amount of the housing stock may now be privately rented), trends could usefully be monitored in conjunction with PSNI and the shared neighbourhood charter;
- Housing Associations and other housing providers should work with their tenants to commit to living in Shared Future communities - this should be measured under performance inspections;
- Future commitments are needed to support, develop and incentivise pilot schemes on integrated housing (without having a negative impact on equality and objective need); mixed home ownership to promote less divided territory; new build shared housing projects in both the public and private sector; supporting the intervention of an increased level of housing management in potential Shared Future Estates to tackle early attempts to destablise these areas.

Workplaces. There is insufficient recognition of the central role of trade unions have played in combating harassment. It would be appropriate if design teams that are engaging on workplace actions and employment opportunities identified a role for trade unions, as well as businesses, in order to reduce existing or potential barriers to cohesive shared workplaces.

Community Development. In moving forward under this current strategy it is perhaps timely to re-emphasise community development principles of participation and inclusion, and highlight the importance of a commitment to acknowledge the impact its work can have on good relations as well as potential opportunities to promote good relations through its activities.

CRC comment on TBUC priority area: Our Safe Community

Interface Communities. Cities and towns are divided by the physical barriers which were once seen as short term protection for embattled communities but have now become part of the permanent structural landscape. These structures serve to remind us that the hostility, fear and anger of the past remain alive and continue to threaten the peace of people and communities on either side of the barrier – the fact remains that, without the barrier, lives will be put at risk. Safety, both in terms of its perception and its reality, is critical.

Whilst the physical barriers serve to remind immediate and wider society of a continued fear and uncertainty between communities, there are consequences other than segregation, such as sustained and ingrained patterns of poverty. Many of these areas have been those most traumatized and shaped by conflict and many have been left as the poorest areas in our society. Therefore tackling the removal or dismantling of physical barriers and non-physical barriers is a complex issue. It needs to have the regeneration of these communities at its heart encompassing inward investment, public realm, increased employment opportunities, and the creation of a culture of safety and openness.

It is therefore CRC's vision, where possible, to find ways to provide structured support for initiatives to regenerate interface areas, leading to the eventual creation of open and vibrant communities free from fear, threat or any obstacle to interaction across the region.

To achieve this CRC has long prioritised Interfaces in its peace-building activities and has committed a range of resources – both financial and developmental – to assist communities move from a culture of management i.e. mobile phone networks towards a culture of transformation. CRC believes that a key principle in all responses to the legacy of physical segregation is that the safety and security of those people living near to interfaces and interface barriers must be the priority. Yet, at the same time it is the responsibility of government to develop responses to the real challenges of fear and threat which do not rely on permanent barriers or patterns of exclusion and violence.

CRC's investment in people, organisations and programmes to alleviate violence and to create advocacy for communities on the interfaces has led to the development of a range of policy comment and practical developments. In 2009

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CRC brought forward a framework '*Towards Sustainable Security: Interface barriers & the Legacy of Segregation in Belfast*' which focused on the regeneration of interface communities. CRC's 2011 *Guidance Paper on Proposed Process for Interface Barrier Transformation/Removal (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/iwg-interface-barriers-guidance-nov-2011.pdf)* advocated for the development of local strategic approaches to barriers, safety and security (both BCC and DOJ have formally adopted the Barriers Interface Guidance as a framework for working within interface communities).

CRC calls for a strategic approach that includes:

- supporting peace-building initiatives in the development and delivery of short, medium and long-term actions to address social, community, physical, economic and security and safety issues in interface areas;
- build upon existing good practice and address any gaps in provision;
- calls on government departments to adapt a flexible approach to practices which may be beneficial to enabling or sustaining regeneration and transformation approaches which take full account of the problems and opportunities for local areas and the entire region;
- Departments should create the conditions for the removal of all interface barriers across the region;
- The process of removing interface barriers should be part of an inclusive, community approach towards building a shared society;
- New barriers will only be built if all other avenues of intervention have been tried and failed. Priority must be given to other forms of investment in communities to ensure their safety and security without the need for physical structures.

CRC also recognises that interfaces are not just about physical barriers but also invisible barriers that separate communities often demarcated by CCTV cameras, derelict buildings, flags etc. CRC's 2010 publication *Beyond Belfast - contested space in urban rural and cross border settings* outlines an even broader range of contested space/interface typologies which must also be recognised in relation to the physical division of communities.

Safety. All people should be free and safe to live where they want, and all people should be safe to walk the streets and access services as workers, service users or visitors. It is important that policy aspirations realise these high level goals in practice. Creating cities, towns and neighbourhoods as safe places for everyone should involve the goal of 'shared space' as a central theme in the designing, developing and implementing of measures and programmes.

In addition to this it is very important that society works to eliminate attacks on cultural and symbolic property. This requires effective strategies and action plans to improve protection and enforcement in relation to hate crime and attacks on cultural, faith and symbolic property and monuments. In developing protection it is important to acknowledge the vulnerability of property belonging to all faiths and symbolic properties relating to minority ethnic groups.
CRC supports efforts to ensure that justice is served on those who intimidate - this requires strong connections between policing and communities as well as the

engagement of statutory services. This should be directly connected to community policing strategies and community development plans.

Local organisations who are involved in tackling hate crime at local level are critical to any policy development, interventions or programmes aimed at promoting better community safety and reducing tensions and violence, as well as creating shared spaces, especially at interfaces. Likewise, targeting hotspots will require a joined up approach and must include work with community leaders.

TBUC highlights a wide range of important and relevant issues such as rural and urban interfaces. Central to the TBUC priorities is the elimination of peace barriers by 2023, and the development of an Interface Barrier Support Package. In addition to these actions the strategy also refers to issues such as designing out crime, the involvement of government and local communities, as well as the development of an Inter-Agency group.

Another TBUC objective is the aim of creating a culture where more people feel able to report intimidation and harassment, and highlights the role of the Community Safety Strategy as well as the Policing & Community Safety Partnerships in supporting and developing confidence and access to relevant reporting structures. Other issues include safety and young people and safety of property.

CRC has invested heavily in this area with the aim of empowering communities to live peaceful, safe and interconnected lives. The following are a number of suggestions that would help support OFMDFM and the Executive achieve the aim of creating *'a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety'.*

Firstly, the removal of barriers and the opening of gates between communities represent a very important exchange of trust which must be carefully nurtured for the sake of the next generations that should never have to live in fear. However, the responsibility for changing our segregated landscape does not rest solely on the shoulders of local communities. It will take vision, investment, and changes in strategy across a wide range of public policy areas including housing and social development, education, culture, and physical economic regeneration.

Secondly, it is imperative that government departments and agencies utilise the knowledge and expertise currently in place for any long-term intervention - local learning must permeate the policy making process across all government departments. In moving forward CRC suggests the following actions:

CRC's recommends that the *Guidance Paper on Proposed Process for Interface Barrier Transformation/Removal (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/iwg-interface-barriers-guidance-nov-2011.pdf)* is used as a framework for moving forward to ensure the following:

- Interfaces should be considered at a strategic level therefore ensuring they are given due regard when developing local action plans.
- An inter-Departmental approach needs to tie changes in communities to changes in regeneration and investment.

- Build on the desires and knowledge of local communities and tie interface communities into the regeneration of our cities and region.
- Use regeneration to develop opportunities for social inclusion and cohesion, both at inter and intra community level.

It is important that OFMDFM considers existing structures such as the Interface Community Partners and the Inter-Agency Group. There is a coherency to these relationships and associations, and it would be useful to examine possible duplication and overlaps, as well as learning from what is currently working.

Regeneration. The generation of a 'vibrant, inclusive and diverse environment' needs to build in social, economic and environmental benefits, and these should be addressed collectively in a coherent and coordinated fashion. Benefits should be mobilized to local communities, the wider city and region and visitors, connecting previously marginalised areas into the local economy and society.

Safer Communities. Tension monitoring is an important tool drawing on policing methodologies at local government level to measure potential or growing problems in a locality, as well as tasking and coordinating cross-agency interventions. Some thought is required to consider how this can be developed as an effective tool in de-escalating and preventing tensions, and in other district council areas with high level of sectarian and racist incidents and crimes, and criminal damage.

Community relations and good relations should be mainstreamed into the management of shared space programmes and central to intervention and diversionary programmes. This would create committed partnership rather than dialogue as the prime model of interface management. This could create programmes which allow people to explore both intra and inter community violence, the damage it causes and to devise shared practical outcomes.

Children and young people.
It is clear from the work that CRC supports on the ground that there is a huge appetite from young people to engage and interact with difference and 'otherness' both in formal and non-formal settings.

It is therefore the role of the TBUC strategy and those who will support its implementation, to facilitate and meet these expectations.

In order to help achieve the aspirations of children and young people CRC has the following comments and suggestions to make in relation to the proposed strategy initiatives:

- The range of commitments and actions set out in the strategy has the potential to add value to current and past work, yet it is crucial that all actions are looked at holistically.
- The strategy rightly acknowledges the critical role children and young people play in reconciliation and peace building[4].

[4] CRC is pleased that OFMDFM have listened to concerns from the previous CSI consultation and have instead taken a more positive view of the role young people have in society.

- The strategy acknowledges many of the challenges facing children and young people, and refers to a range of research and good practice which sets the context for the future development of this work with young people.
- The strategy welcomes the various initiatives set out to help develop and build on current practice; in particular OFMDFM's commitment to developing longer-term interventions, as well as the crisis interventions required at certain periods and in particular areas during the year.
- However, it is important to move beyond the rhetoric and ensure action that will address the structural and political issues that continue to impact on the ability of generations of young people to live in a shared and peaceful society.

CRC is aware that much of this work is in a developmental phase and is being taken forward by various departmental design teams. It is imperative progress updates are regularly published, as well as continual engagement with relevant stakeholders and experts involved in current/past initiatives. In particular, this should include schools, youth organisations, communities and researchers. Work with children and young people on the ground that evidences need and acknowledges good practice will help shape these initiatives.

CRC expects the TBUC strategy to support children and young people to understand the challenges facing them in a society emerging from conflict, as well as leading the way to challenge the patterns of the past and assist in building a shared and reconciled society. In light of this, CRC makes the following suggestions for moving the various proposals forward:

- *All* children should have the opportunity to engage in activity that promotes, encourages and develops better community relations.
- Proposed activities should seek to enhance and increase existing and current engagement in order to take full advantage of best-practice relationship-building activity.
- Continue to support targeted and intensive work in areas experiencing communal tensions, and examine how any new work will compliment/align with local peace-building activity i.e. compliment and develop a whole community/school approach.
- Summer camps/schools, cross-community sporting events and buddy schemes should support/link with other areas of the curriculum and ensure a collective approach that brings added benefit to ongoing work as well as providing a continuum of progressive activity.
- CRC is represented on the United Youth Programme oversight group which has engaged extensively with key stakeholders and is making progress in the development of programmes in relation to young people not in education or training. Nevertheless, the programme does not have a confirmed dedicated budget to carry out its stated aims.
- CRC recommends that the United Youth Programme undertake a survey of young people's attitudes and experiences of good relations. This should then be fed back into the formal education system to ensure current practice is reviewed in light of experiences – opportunities to adjust methods/material earlier in the formal and non-formal structures.
- In relation to shared campuses, it would be useful to engage with the trade union movement that has led the way in creating and ensuring safe workplaces regarding sectarianism and racism.

- Shared Campuses should build upon the practice of current sharing and integration, and the department should establish a benchmark for these campuses and their *p*rogression post-financial support.
- Proposals/applications for 10 Shared Campuses should identify existing local peace-building activity and identify opportunities for complimentarity.
- In addition to Shared Campuses, the department should indicate how previous/existing models that have delivered positive outcomes will be mainstreamed into public policy; as well as update how/when the recommendations set out in the Ministerial Advisory Group Report on Advancing Shared Education will be progressed.
- Existing and current engagement should not be affected by new initiatives i.e. should avoid displacing funding from interventions that have positive outcomes/outputs;.

Finally, appropriate budgets must be set to meet these obligations, as well as indicating how the work will be mainstreamed.

CRC comment on TBUC priority area: Our Cultural Expression

Culture remains a vital and unresolved area of concern for inter-community relations affecting all communities. In this context of faith and minority ethnic diversity and the legacy of the conflict, important issues include language, commemoration; cultural expression as part of shared space i.e. flags, emblems, parades and protests, as well as the important role of arts, culture and sport as critical parts of a policy of participation, culture and change.

CRC supports a cultural diversity policy that has at its heart a commitment to reflect the variety and complexity of cultural life, to raise questions, to create safe and open places for interaction and debate, to create gateways for engagement and to resolve political issues in a way that is consistent with the overarching values of equality, human rights and reconciliation.

CRC has a long history of work with Parades and Protests, Arts, Sports, Festivals and Museums. Recent examples include long term work both directly and through funded organisations that work on parades, protests and local disputes. CRC has partnered with the Arts Council on Cultural Diversity and Re-Imaging Communities, and has offered strategic and local support for festivals and community arts and sports initiatives including the Belfast St Patrick's Day festival, Orangefest, the Mela, the Maiden City Festival, Feile an Phobail, Football for All and Peace Players International. Finally CRC has worked with museums on conflict, cultural diversity, symbols, and religious diversity.

CRC believes that culture and arts make a positive contribution to peace-building, reconciliation and the promotion of good relations, and using these practical interventions CRC has developed a range of policy comment which is relevant to this policy and practice discourse.

- The link between culture, investment in arts, culture and creative industries and tourism is well made, and engaged and active communities are a prerequisite of success. It is important that opportunities exist to access and engage with high-quality arts and culture, but in doing so stakeholders need

to recognise that the divided geography and existence of contested space continues to impact on mobility and accessibility. These issues would be especially applicable to Community & Youth Arts programmes, and the application of a good relations lens at the development stage of programmes/projects with relevant groups and stakeholders would help identify barriers and develop actions to redress exclusions.

- Promoting access to culture and arts presents huge potential for the promotion of good relations outcomes. This could be facilitated by encouraging and supporting inter-community dialogue within and between the particular categories. In particular engagement with the Department of Education and ESA/ELB's should explore how this interaction can create opportunities for inter-community school contact. This is especially relevant given the recent publication of the Ministerial Advisory Group's Report on Advancing Shared Education.
- Museums have a vital role as places of interaction and public education. In a divided society this has a particular importance, as museums offer a safe space to engage with evidence, experience, artefacts and stories which may be different from our expectations. There can be few more important places which enable us to make sense of our diversity, our interdependence and all of our cultural traditions and identities. Museums have the vital task of reflecting and reframing debates on key issues and events, through demonstrating a commitment to plural voices, encouraging active engagement with the stories and experiences of self and of others, and providing an open, safe and shared context within which that discussion can be validated in the public realm. It is important that museums in Northern Ireland make a commitment to open and shared learning, in relation to all aspects of the past. It should allow for a confident approach in dealing with divisions of the past, with the commemoration of controversial or divisive events or the legacy of violence. CRC views our local languages as an integral element of the rich cultural tapestry which we all share. This important part of our intercultural heritage needs to be respected. CRC welcomes opportunities to broaden acceptance and knowledge of Irish and Ulster Scots languages as well as encouraging usage and participation.

C*ommemoration.* In post conflict contested societies the process of commemoration carries within it particular challenges and these challenges require specific responses, which should incorporate good relations approaches and dialogue as key components. Alternatives are needed in post conflict societies so that people are not locked into binary identity, and the European Convention proclaims that states need to involve states, institutional and private actors, including the public sector, in taking responsibility for cultural engagement in divided societies.

In developing our perspective on the importance of cultural expression in the context of making the politically significant decade of anniversaries, both CRC and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) have worked in partnership from 2010 to stimulate a conversation which seeks to raise the issue of remembering in public space and to promote a process that leads to the development of practice models and principles.

As society engages with the legacies of this revolutionary period there is potential to reinforce the development of political and civic culture – engaging with culture and

identity, rights, what we mean by democracy and the nature of political change. We may also be able to acknowledge the legacy of the decade and support engagement with the complexity of our history.

Following a wide consultation the following principles were developed by CRC and HLF for Marking Anniversaries

- Start from the historical **facts**;
- Recognise the implications and **consequences** of what happened;
- Understand that different **perceptions** and interpretations exist; and
- Show how events and activities can deepen **understanding** of the period;

All to be seen in the context of an 'inclusive and accepting society'.

These have been endorsed by DCAL, agencies and local authorities as programmes are developed to mark these events. It is also important to earmark principles for expressing commemorative practices in the public space. CRC strongly advocates that principles underpinning exploration and anniversary activities in the public arena should aim for a plural, interactive and modern approach. Understanding and practice of models for how commemoration set in broad historical contexts should be fostered in the public as opposed to private space.

Moving Forward

TBUC raises valuable points on issues such as principles of respect and tolerance, sharing traditions, responsible expression. It also highlights an Intercultural Arts Strategy, as well as the use of festivals as vehicles for expressing cultural difference and promoting understanding. The Strategy goes on to highlight a new Annual Community Relations/Cultural Awareness Week, Sports and Safety, as well as Commemoration work with museums, libraries, and a strategic discourse. Other issues mentioned include music, language, arts, and literature.

However, CRC considers the opportunities to promote culture, arts and sports as vehicles for integration and participation as undeveloped, and it remains unclear as to what constitutes new activity as opposed to current activity.

Finally, CRC highlighted in its response to TBUC's predecessor the lack of reference to faith diversity, as well as a lack of exploration of the barriers to integration and expression of faith and minority ethnic groups. This continues to be the case.

In Northern Ireland sectarianism is increasingly rooted in international standards. In fact, any ambiguity has been removed by recent decisions of the UN and Council of Europe – *for the purposes of human rights law sectarian identity is to be regarded as an ethnicity and sectarianism as a form of racism.* TBUC does not explicitly take into account existing protections under European Charter on Human Rights (ECHR) of Council of Europe Conventions. While couched in aspirational terms, building on the ECHR and The Council of Europe's Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society would give a stronger baseline from a cultural rights perspective.

CRC therefore recommends further work to be carried out on the definition of cultural heritage, ensuring it is inclusive and in line with Article 3(b) of the Convention on Cultural Heritage that draws together "the ideals, principles and values, derived from

the experience gained through progress and past conflicts, which foster the development of a peaceful and stable society, founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law".

The UN Special Rapporteur has also focused on culture in contested and post conflict societies and argues conflicting views are not the issue. How they are expressed or resolved is the critical issue. Culture has a potential role in bringing people together. However, it can be problematic if, for example, cultural expression becomes the battlefield or the place of future confrontation. In this context a cultural rights based approach suggests:

- The principle that one is free to express one's own perspective of past events
- State has primordial role to set minimum standards
- Use all means to reduce tensions
- Importance of mutual respect and understanding
- Zero tolerance to calls for violence in the public sphere.

The basic principles suggested by the UN Special Rapporteur on Culture are:

- Healing process only if all included (memorials and narratives)
- Neutral space to enjoy and invent culture
- Individual identities privilege diversity and collective identities privilege similar; important to leave room for diversity
- We all have a stake and responsibility in a shared future based on non-discrimination and equality.

Cultural expression needs to take as its starting point the importance of movement between and within these identities. There is no one settled way of doing this and therefore the development of principles at a regional level are critical in assisting both the creation and management of conflicting views about culture. Against this backdrop CRC wishes to see:

- policies and programmes designed to renew and reclaim public space and reaffirm that community ownership has the potential to build good relations within and between communities;
- support given to sports bodies who seek to open up their sports to the participation of all;
- the utilisation of art galleries, museums and other creative approaches to contextualise how our society and communities has changed, as well as embracing growing diversity e.g. creating more collections concentrating on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the present day;

Regarding commemorations, government should explore how a cultural rights approach can inform the marking of the anniversaries of the recent conflict as these enter into the 20th, 30th, 40th and 50th anniversaries. As communities mark these tragedies with their own commemorative events, the development and adoption of principles based on the understanding gained from 2012 -23 work would provide a helpful framework over the coming years. It will be important in order to promote healing, acknowledge pain and avoid the prospect of increasing tensions or the threat of renewed violence.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Cultural diversity programmes within TBUC would be significantly enhanced if it incorporated the following :

- encourage a more complex debate about cultural expression, linking TBUC cultural expression aspirations with the ECHR e.g. practical implications and workable principles; and
- draw on expertise of UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

SECTION 5 LEGISLATION AND DEFINITIONS.

Following consultations with various funded and none funded groups that have a relationship with CRC and the promotion of community/good relations issues, it has become increasingly clear that there is a need to define what is meant by the term good relations. The TBUC strategy cites the concept of good relations but makes no attempt to provide a definition for the purposes of legislation. The strategy proposes to enhance the good relations duty through the establishment of an Equality and Good Relations Commission. This newly established body has the potential to significantly enhance the role of good relations in terms of a scrutiny role. CRC believes that TBUC must provide a formal definition of good relations, sectarianism and reconciliation and this must be included in the strategy and contained within the forthcoming legislation to establish an Equality and Good Relations Commission along with guiding principles.

However, an obvious gap in the strategy is the lack of progress around legislation which continues to leave the tensions between equality and good relations largely ignored. Definitions of good relations, sectarianism and racism should be included in any proposed legislation and conform to international standards. Particular attention should be paid to those treaties ratified by the United Kingdom through inter-governmental processes at the United Nations and Council of Europe. Relevant general comments issued by the treaty bodies and other soft laws should also be referred to when drafting the proposed definitions.

The outworking of the proposed legislation must also provide:

- an appropriate and robust legal framework to support good relations work at a regional level, and localised within communities;
- direction to public authorities in light of future changes regarding their statutory duties; and
- a robust legal framework for the private, community and voluntary sectors.

Any future Equality and Good Relations Commission must be cognizant of the expertise within the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and CRC in the provision of advice to the Northern Ireland Executive and Legislative Assembly with respect to measures necessary for the effective promotion of good relations, including reconciliation and peace-building. The new Commission must also have its independence guaranteed and protected.

What good relations means. The promotion of good relations, under Section 75 (2), is about breaking through the denial and avoidance of sectarianism and racism in Northern Ireland by acknowledging its impact on society and the organisations working within it. It states a public commitment to these beliefs and continually seeks ways to build on them for the future.

However, the term *good relations* is not defined within TBUC. Nor is there any detailed information about the good relations principles referred to. This will need to be addressed since 'good relations' is the goal of the policy and the rationale for initiatives and methods that will be deployed. Organisations will approach this process from their own, unique perspective and with their own particular concerns. For example, words such as sectarianism, racism, equality and diversity can have

different and sometimes, loaded meanings as people work through issues from individual and community viewpoints. Below is a sample definition of good relations developed by CRC in the *Good Relations Framework* publication 2004:

"Good Relations challenges sectarianism and racism, promotes equality, develops respect for diversity and raises awareness of the interdependence of the people and institutions within NI" (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Good_relations_final.pdf)

TBUC outlines a vision of "*a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance."*

Reconciliation. CRC believes that TBUC's *'desirability of good relations and reconciliation'* should be strengthened. The PEACE III programme is based on a widely accepted definition of reconciliation developed by Hamber and Kelly for the PEACE II programme as a result of support agreed through CRC[i] (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/dd/papers/dd04recondef.pdf). The programme was agreed by the current Executive in 2007 and the definition still appears to us to be both accurate and helpful and should be reinstated:

"The definition regards reconciliation as a voluntary act which cannot be imposed and involves five interwoven and related strands, as follows:

*• **Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society:** The development of a vision of a shared future requiring the involvement of the whole society, at all levels. Although individuals may have different opinions or political beliefs, the articulation of a common vision of an interdependent, just, equitable, open and diverse society is a critical part of any reconciliation process;*

*• **Acknowledging and dealing with the past:** Acknowledging the hurt, losses, truths and suffering of the past. Providing the mechanisms for justice, healing, restitution or reparation, and restoration (including apologies if necessary and steps aimed at redress). To build reconciliation, individuals and institutions need to acknowledge their own role in the conflicts of the past, accepting and learning from it in a constructive way so as to guarantee non-repetition;*

*• **Building positive relationships:** Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process, resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us;*

*• **Significant cultural and attitudinal change:** Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard. A culture of respect for human rights and human difference is developed creating a context where each citizen becomes an active participant in society and feels a sense of belonging; and*

*• **Substantial social, economic and political change:** The social, economic and political structures which gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed.*

Definition of sectarianism. Sectarianism has shaped the structures which we have inherited from education, to public safety to community development. It has shaped

the most basic personal choices like where we might live, what school we go to, what we can wear and what we might say to whom. All of this shapes our attitudes to politics, economics, our ideas about the law and culture and our understanding of history and morality in Ireland.

In relation to a definition of sectarianism TBUC states that for the purposes of the strategy *'sectarianism is defined as: threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour or attitudes towards a person by reason of that person's religious belief or political opinion; or to an individual as a member of such a group'*. CRC welcomes the opportunity to respond to the draft legislation (when published) to establish the Equality and Good Relations Commission which will seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism to be included in the legislation. Sectarianism has not been defined in law in either Ireland or the UK. In Northern Ireland but is increasingly rooted in international standards. For the purposes of human rights law sectarian identity is to be regarded as an ethnicity and sectarianism as a form of racism. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) convention states:

> *'In this Convention, the term "racial discrimination" shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.'*

(http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx)

The UK government is a signatory to international human rights standards which also bind the devolved administration and its executive agencies. In addition there is a body of important domestic human rights, equality/non-discrimination and good relations statutes, as well as criminal law. TBUC also rests on key international commitments such as the European Convention on Human Rights, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Resolution 1325, World Programme for Education, and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, as well as domestic legislation and policy commitments. CRC recommends that this legal framework is reflected in the draft legislation to establish the Equality and Good Relations Commission.

CRC's publication *Good Relations Framework - An approach to the development of Good Relations* (see above link) uses Ken Logue's definition of sectarianism in *Anti-Sectarian Work – A Framework for Action (1993)*

> *'Sectarianism in the context of Northern Ireland is discrimination arising from political or religious prejudice, leading to relationships of distrust between the two major politico-religious communities. Sectarianism is not just a matter of economic, social or political consideration; nor is it simply a question of personal attitudes or behaviour. It is an historical and cultural phenomenon arising out of political and religious differences and perpetuated by group and self interest*[ii]*.*

Logue's definition clearly points to political and religious prejudice as the identifiers of sectarianism. He also identifies the outcome of sectarianism in Northern Ireland as one of 'distrust' between the two main communities (British unionist, majority

Protestant and Irish nationalist, majority Catholic). It is this issue of 'distrust' that begins to be addressed by good relations.

Sectarianism beyond the two main communities. Sectarianism in NI has tended to be in relation to fractured relationships between Protestants and Catholics. Beyond NI, sectarianism extends to discrimination or disadvantage suffered by someone because of their religious belief which goes beyond Catholic and Protestant and includes all minority faiths - Muslim, Bahá'í, Hindu, Judaism etc. Therefore, it is important to recognise that sectarianism goes beyond intra-Christian conflict.

TBUC must not only tackle the specific and enormous legacy of sectarian division, but also address hostility, discrimination and hatred targeted at those from minority ethnic communities. The relationship between sectarianism and the commitment to an inter-cultural future are clearly important aspects of TBUC including its relationship to the Racial Equality Strategy. Unfortunately TBUC made very little reference to this link. Similarly, the draft Racial Equality Strategy *A Sense of Belonging* does not make a strong or clear enough connection between these two interdependent strategies. However, the inclusion of both offers an opportunity to strengthen the connections and jointed up processes and programmes where possible.

Given the clear linkages between racism and sectarianism, CRC recently facilitated a number of discussions with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss and reflect on OFMDFM's draft Racial Equality Strategy, *A Sense of Belonging.* Emerging from this discourse was the desire to find common ground on a number of issues that concerned those working for and with people from a BME and minority faith background living and working in Northern Ireland. Subsequently, a unified response was developed and launched in the form of a '*Common Platform'* paper (http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CommonPlatform.pdf) which highlighted an agreed twelve common themes and principles critical to the successful implementation of a strategy.

Recommendations

CRC would welcome the co-ordination of reconciliation and good relations efforts on regional bases and believes that this work should be facilitated by a regional body responsible for the management and allocation of long term funding, to address good relations, racism and sectarianism. The regional body should also provide long term developmental support in partnership with organisations (voluntary and statutory) working within communities at a grass roots level.

The promotion of understanding is also a concept referenced in human rights instruments (see Article 7(3) of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in relation to promoting understanding -as well as respect and tolerance– in relation to minority languages.) Instead of looking for Northern Ireland based interpretations, good relations framed within legal international law and concepts could be adopted. This would then allow us to draw on international instruments and good practice. If this was to be implemented in Northern Ireland, it would bring a

measure of legal certainty to the good relations duty by actually having a definition of the concept on the face of the legislation.

CRC believes that definitions of good relations, racism and sectarianism are required in order to address these difficult issues. Definitions provided should meet with international standards and obligations ensuring practise is recognised as a standard-bearer for international protection and good governance. When giving consideration to this it is important to reflect on The Equality Act 2010 which states that good relations are about *'tackling prejudice and promoting understanding'*. The Explanatory Notes to the Act give examples of how this duty might apply in practice. In relation to 'tackling prejudice' strategies to tackle homophobic bulling in schools is mentioned (good relations duties in Great Britain cover sexual orientation and many other sub sections that we have in Section 75 (1) (2)). In relation to 'promoting understanding', measures to facilitate understanding and conciliation between different communities is referenced to.

SECTION 6 GOOD RELATIONS INDICATORS IN MONITORING AND MEASURING THE PROGRESS OF GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS.

Peace-building evaluation has the potential to empower and to capacitate users and communities[5]. Therefore the development of appropriate indicators and outcomes provide an opportunity to strategically consider how societies are building peace, and what else needs to be done.

CRC has a strategic interest in monitoring and evaluating peace building activities, and uses this information to map progress in the building and development of good community relations. In addition to internal evaluation processes, CRC has also recently undertaken a 3 year (2012-2014) independent review of the condition and impact of the peace process in Northern Ireland. This appraisal was independently funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and resulted in the publication of 3 Peace Monitor Reports[6]. As previously stated the first report appeared in February 2012 and drew mainly on statistics that are in the public domain but which had not been previously assembled across the wide range of issues affecting life here[7]. Detailed and statistical evidence was gathered across four dimensions - security, equality, political progress, and cohesion and sharing. This annual monitoring provided a mechanism to measure the distance we have travelled either closer to or further away from the shared goal of a peaceful and inclusive society.

Given our strategic interest in this work, CRC contributed to the Good Relations Indicator Review 2013/2014 both as members the various thematic advisory sub-groups, as well as by a formal written submission. CRC's submission agreed with the development of high level indicators, thereby enabling a review against strategic objectives, but stressed the importance of being very clear as to what outcome was being sought, and then setting out how this would be achieved. CRC's formal response also drew attention to the Outcomes-Based Accountability model highlighting it as a useful process for devising outcomes which would be useful for further consideration by the department. .

In addition to this CRC drew attention to the ambiguity of the consultation i.e. it appeared the intention was to measure proposals put forward in Together: Building a United Community, yet this would prove difficult given the lack of published detail on programme activity under each of the priorities.

However, if the intention was a wider measuring of good relations i.e. additional to TBUC, then CRC was of the strong view that the department, and consequently the indicators must then address how other elements of peace building work would be monitored and presented. CRC concluded that a TBUC *only* approach would be restrictive and would result in an incomplete picture on the health of good relations in our society, and CRC recommended comprehensive monitoring that included a

[5] Bush, K. (2004) 'The Commodification, Compartmentalization and Militarization of Peacebuilding'. In Keating and Knight (eds) *Building Sustainable Peace*. Tokyo and Edmonton: UN University Press and U of Alberta Press, 23-46.
[6] Under A Shared Future Strategy CRC was tasked with preparing a three-year assessment on the 'health' of community relations in Northern Ireland – this assessment would form part of the Government's main triennial report which the Assembly would be invited to consider, debate and report. This aspect was not taken forward by the local administration but CRC has been able to carry forward the concept of independent assessment with the support of JRCT & JRF.
[7] Where official statistics did not tell the full picture survey-based data was also used.

broad range of programme activity such as schemes and projects from across the Executive that are outside the TBUC sphere e.g. DE's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy and its corresponding Enhancement Scheme, as well as making efforts to include *all* peace-building programmes.

It is CRC 's position that indicators must act as a key stimulus for further change and should inform how much is being done and how well it is being done i.e. is society better off? The following are a number of general recommendations made within our submission and are relevant to this current TBUC Inquiry:

- **Research Forum:** a research forum should be established and used to identify gaps in the available data and advise on further research needed to create a coherent view of what is happening regarding peace-building (an expansion of the advisory panel).
- **Interpretation:** peace building is unpredictable and often experiences unexpected set-backs. Consequently it is important to capture the various realities of success so as not to discourage innovation and learning. It is for this reason the interpretation of data is such a critical aspect of monitoring peace as it can provide a wider perspective on how society is benefitting from peace-building activity e.g. impact of symbolic events. If wider interpretation of the data does not occur the framework could end up as a limited compendium of statistics (albeit useful but not as beneficial as it could be). Part of this interpretation would involve tasking each department to provide a yearly analyse of the impact of the work carried out or supported by them, either under TBUC or other programme activity?
- **Addressing gaps:** Currently the indicators appear to have a regional output. This is useful for a broad sense of progress, but another useful addition would be a geographical breakdown of progress under the various outcomes. The categorisation of data in this format would support local interventions, as well as assisting policy development, particularly for district councils. It is important to note that not all areas experience good relations in the same way, and it is important to be able to carry out comparative analysis and lesson learning within and between different geographies – this could support targeted good relations work on a range of thematic areas e.g. housing, regeneration, education, cultural diversity etc.
- **Together Building a United Community Remit.** However, if the proposed Good Relations Framework is to be guided by TBUC actions then the following should take place (a) an essential purpose of the good relations indicators is that they map achievements, change and impact. It is therefore necessary that officials devise a framework that charts trend lines across various indicators/outcomes; (b) review the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for *each* of the TBUC actions and replicate/align with a corresponding indicator; (c) engage with the various design teams and delivery bodies to devise data collection methods that will accumulate both quantitative and qualitative data; (d) as programmes develop OFMDFM should develop time series evaluation frameworks – it is important to measure the outcomes for participants within a scaled timeframe.
- CRC recommended further exploration regarding the measurement of attitudinal change across specific TBUC interventions – this additional data would bring added value to quantitative data.

- Statistical data, research and information from evaluations should be considered collectively – a cooperative approach would provide a valuable overview of progress and support engagement on next steps between departments and strategic partners.

It was of particular concern that despite an objective of removing interfaces by 2023 there was no corresponding indicator to measure progress on this goal.

Finally, CRC made a response to the OFMDFM January 2014 public consultation on its good relations indicators. CRC is considering OFMDFM's recent consultation summary report set against CRC recommendations made.

Key Priority 1: Our Children and Young People

Shared Aim: to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations. Outcome 1.1 - Improving attitudes between young people from different backgrounds. Outcome 1.2 -Young people engaging in bringing the community together.

Generally CRC is content with the outcomes, but considers other indicators are needed to capture success and progress/non-progress.

At first glance, the indicators appear loosely connected to TBUC. There needs to be a stronger association with the TBUC actions i.e. the buddy scheme, united youth, summer schools. If this connection is not made it will be difficult to prove it is the TBUC actions that are achieving the impact rather than other non-TBUC related activity. Clarification is needed as to whether OFMDFM intends to establish a monitoring framework within each of the proposed actions to measure attitudinal changes following engagement e.g. United Youth Programme, Buddy Scheme and Summer Schools etc?

It is unclear what data the framework will use as its baseline if it has omitted information held about other non-TBUC activity e.g. data on integrated education and CRED enhancement scheme. It is important that integrated education is included as a measurement within this outcome - it is a critical partner in bringing children together and influencing change. Again, there is confusion as to why certain aspects of community relations activity are not considered as a critical measurement tool for appraising government progress in building a shared and united community. This needs to be resolved.

Capturing the amount and type of sharing within education is important. Yet, much more crucial is the quality of this sharing. It is important to develop measures that measure this i.e. is the sharing experience a one off event, or part of a longer-term programme of engagement. Again it would be beneficial to know how different areas of the curriculum help facilitate this interaction, as well as which sectors are engaging with each other, and if this changes over time. As previously suggested a geographical breakdown would be extremely useful for planning and helping to target future support.

Furthermore the indicator framework needs to capture data from sporting organisations and their related programmes - a corresponding indicator is needed. This also applies to diversionary activities etc and discounting this data would be a lost opportunity.

Finally, it is necessary to widen the age category across *all* the indicators, and not just a few. This is particularly important given Paul Connolly's research into children as young as 3 and their awareness of communal symbols. Given that OFMDFM has invested in a number of childcare initiatives within the 'Contested Space' Programme it would be useful to capture this attitudinal change amongst these participants as well.

Key Priority 2: Our Shared Community

Shared Aim: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone. Outcome 2.1 - Increased use of shared space and services (e.g. leisure centres, shopping centres, education, housing) Outcome 2.2 - Shared Space is accessible to all.

Again, CRC has similar concerns that the data collected for this outcome is narrow. Indicators that could enhance outcomes include:
Education:

- %/number of teachers involved in shared education programmes;
- %/number of trainee teachers who undertake placements in two or more different sectors.

Housing

- %/number of people living in non-single identity areas;
- %/number of people requesting to live in a mixed area;
- %/number of residents activity involved in creating and supporting shared neighbourhoods.

Social clauses

- %/number of government contracts incorporated with social clauses carrying out work in interface communities/contested space.

An indicator measuring shared employment should be developed given the emphasis on OFMDFM's United Youth Programme. It is also unclear how the indicators will monitor progress on Urban villages/Shared neighbourhood developments e.g. CRC would welcome a conversation given the recent announcement on the two urban villages which give little detail as to how they will facilitate a shared community.

Finally, the conclusions above are primarily focused on quantitative data. CRC has highlighted the need to supplement these indicators with qualitative data, either through specific research or data from evaluation processes. This supplementary data would enable an examination of the hows and the whys, as well as helping to inform future interventions.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Key Priority 3: Our Safe Community

Shared Aim: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety. Outcome 3.1 - Reduce the prevalence of hate crime and intimidation. Outcome 3.2 - A community where places and spaces are safe for all.

From the outset CRC is extremely disappointed at the absence of a specific indicator focusing on interfaces and contested space. This, despite a TBUC headline commitment to reduce and remove interface barriers by 2023, is very concerning. This requires urgent reviewing. CRC has a long history of working with community and interface workers and wants to ensure the work they are involved in is represented and recorded in the indicator framework. Again we would be happy to assist officials in this work, but in the meantime possible indicators could include:

- %/Number of Interface barriers removed;
- %/Number of new/strengthening of interface walls/gates/security barriers etc;
- %/Number of groups funded to carry out work at interfaces and contested spaces;
- %/number of people who feel positive and harmonious relationships exist between communities at interfaces/contested spaces.

Additional indicators for other aspect of the above outcomes could record:

- %/number of people who feel area they live in is safe;
- %/number of families/households applying for SPED or re-housed by SPED;
- %/number of people who would report a hate crime to the police;
- %/number of attacks on symbolic premises i.e. churches, chapels, schools, orange halls, GAA clubs.

Key Priority 4: Our Cultural Expression

Shared Aim: to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced. Outcome 4.1 - Increase sense of community belonging (widens contribution beyond community background) Outcome 4.2 - Cultural diversity is celebrated

The draft consultation documentation highlights possible modification/amendments to reflect the outcomes of the Haass/ O'Sullivan Talks and their subsequent recommendations. Given the current stalemate interim indicators, need to be developed (taking into account previous indicators), which monitor progress as well as attitudes to parades/protests/flags etc.

Other indicators that could improve this section are:

- %/number of people who have attended an event that celebrates a different cultural tradition;
- %/Number of cultural events held during Community Relations/ Cultural Awareness Week;
- %/Number of cultural events supported by the District Council Community Relations Programme.

It is unfortunate given the Decade of Commemoration that no corresponding indicators have been included. CRC works in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and would be happy to discuss possible indicators for mapping this important area of work.

Finally, as with other outcomes it is important to balance quantitative with qualitative data i.e. local decision making could be affected by capacity issues or power relations within the local community. This is a main concern across the indicator framework as a whole.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

APPENDIX 1 CRC SUPPORTED WORK

Over the past three years the Council's Pathfinder, CR/CD and Core Grants Schemes have supports many hundreds of good relations programmes across a wide and diverse range of communities.

The Councils Core Funding Scheme has been able to support and strengthen over 26 regionally focused organisations all of whom are focused on developing and sustaining peace building activities.

Our Core Groups have been at the heart of tackling the many CR issues that still have to be fully resolved such as dealing with the legacy of the past, parading disputes and interface tension community tensions. Through CRC support groups have been able to mediate local solutions to flags, bring together a range of communities to discuss the painful legacy questions that remain, intervene to help restore peace when community violence breaks out and look for collaborative approaches to how groups and communities can better work together.

In line with our core funded networks the programme has also supported nearly three hundred unique community relations programmes. There continues to be remarkable breadth and depth to the work that is supported through the Councils CR/CD Scheme. To give a flavour of the type of peace building activities that has been supported outlined below are the types of programmes that are receiving support:

- Programmes looking at the decade of commemorations and how they can unite communities and improve relationships between them.
- Public debates tackling very difficult issues around sectarianism, the legacy of the past and parading.
- Arts programmes that seek to explore and reflect on conflict and peace-building as well as celebrating the growing diversity of our community.
- Support towards improving relationships between and with minority ethnic communities.
- The programme supported this year Mela Event which attracted over 20k people in a positive & vibrant celebration of cultural diversity and the value that this brings to all.
- Work has been supported to provide diversionary activities particularly during times of community tension when communities are at risk of taking part in riots and civil disturbances.

Through this work, the Community Relations Council is seeking to assist communities to deal with the past, embrace the present and to dream a new future for Northern Ireland which is at peace with itself and which embraces and celebrates diversity.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

CRC core funded groups include:

Armagh City & District Council	
REACT	REACT provides opportunities for individuals and groups of different cultures and identities to work together to develop mutual understanding and respect to reflect the Protestant and Catholic communities in Armagh City.
Belfast City Council	
174 Trust	174 Trust work to build peace and promote reconciliation in North Belfast
Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	BCDA works to sustain, support and celebrate mixed communities and neighbourhoods within Ballynafeigh and elsewhere.
Ballymoney CRC	Ballymoney Community Resource Centre promotes development and sustainability in local communities and good relations is an integral part of its core work.
Belfast Interface Project	Belfast Interface Project works to support Interface communities in order to develop positive relationships.
Community Relations In Schools	Community Relations In Schools provides support to schools to reach out to and engage adults with active cross community and peace building programmes.
Interaction Belfast	Interaction Belfast aims to initiate, encourage and enable inter-community development and community action and to promote greater understanding and the reduction of community divisions along the Springfield /Falls/Shankill interface.
Intercomm	Intercomm works to address social and economic issues prevalent in North Belfast and other interface areas to build relationships within and between communities.
Linc Resource Centre	LINC Resource Centre works to develop good relations in North Belfast with the aid of the church and the community.
North Belfast Interface Network	North Belfast Interface Network aims to improve understanding and develop better relations within the community by addressing interface problems and improving inter community relations.
Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group	SLIG was established by two community forums in the neighbouring, but religiously divided, districts of Suffolk and Lenadoon who united to discuss social issues affecting both communities.
Down District Council	
Harmony Community Trust	Harmony Community Trust works to bring about positive community relations and social inclusion focusing on the North Down, Ards, Down and Greater Belfast areas.

Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Derry City Council	
Junction / Holywell Trust	The Junction/Holywell Trust provides a safe space for cultural activity enabling it to build partnerships and networks across the community.
Peace & Reconciliation Group	The Peace and Reconciliation Group bring various communities together develop community relations learning through programmes incorporating training and residential programmes.
St Columbs Park House	St Columbs Park House seeks to contribute to peace-building and social inclusion through a range of programmes promoting civic participation, human rights and democratic pluralism.
Craigavon Borough Council	
Shankill Parish Caring Association	Shankill Parish Caring Association brings people together to promote facilitate understanding reconciliation and compassionate response to social need in Lurgan.
Multiple Councils	
Community Dialogue	Community Dialogue has a unique facilitated dialogue process which provides an opportunity for participants to deepen their understanding of conflict and peace-building.
Corrymeela Community	Corrymeela Community is a Christian Community of reconciliation. Drawn from many traditions, members individually and together are committed to reconciliation through the healing for social, religious and political divisions that exist in Northern Ireland and throughout the world.
Groundwork NI	Groundwork NI is a regional organisation working to promote community relations through training, network developments, addressing CR based issues whilst promoting dialogue, partnerships and capacity for change.
Irish School of Ecumenics	The Irish School of Ecumenics is an institute at Trinity College Dublin, Christian in its inspiration and committed to dialogue, peace and reconciliation.
Partisan Productions	Partisan Productions produces high quality theatre and film in relation to society and politics, in order to raise public awareness of development within different cultures and political opinions.
Rural Community Network	The Rural Community Network has a shared vision of reconciliation throughout the rural community and works to promote tolerance and mutual trust which can be translated into practical policies and actions.
Tides Training	TIDES Training delivers training in diversity, conflict management, good relations, labour mobility and capacity building themes across Northern Ireland.
Trademark	Trademark works towards social change in which the principles of social justice, equality and pluralism are actively pursued.

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Draft CRC response to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Training for Women Network	Training for Women Network is a cross community network aimed at supporting women in training, employment and business.
Women's Information NI	Women's Information Northern Ireland works to provide women with support to enable them to have greater access to information and community conversations, a key area to this work is brokering good community relations.

Community Relations Council Briefing Paper

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL
OFMDFM COMMITTEE
3RD DECEMBER 2014
TOGETHER BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY: INQUIRY

INTRODUCTION

The Community Relations Council (CRC) welcomes the opportunity to present oral evidence to the OFMDFM Committee regarding the TBUC Inquiry.

From the Inquiry was launched, CRC has been engaged with key stakeholders and organisations interested in the development and implementation of Together: Building a United Community. This engagement influenced the CRC's formal submission to the Inquiry, and continues to act as a lever for ongoing discussion and debate. We are happy to elaborate on the content of these discussions during our evidence.

By way of background and for those members unfamiliar with the work of CRC, we have included a brief overview of the vision and functions of CRC (Appendix 1 expands on current developmental and grant-aid activities).

In addition to this CRC will provide comments on three issues:

- Overview of Good Relations in NI – what practice is working well;
- Funding;
- Good Relations Indicators

We are happy to expand on these issues during the evidence session.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL (CRC)

The Community Relations Council[1] was formed in January 1990 as an independent company and registered charity. It originated as a proposal of a research report commissioned by the NI Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights.

Vision

- Lead change towards a society free from sectarianism and racism
- Advocate for change towards a society whose principles are equity (fairness), the acceptance of diversity and a shared sense of our interdependence
- Support activity that promotes a shared and better future for all
- Support and encourage change in public policy and practice towards a shared and better future

Strategic Aim

Since it was established, the main aim of the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council has been to assist the development of greater understanding and co-

[1] **Organisational Structure.** CRC is governed by the Members of the Council. The Council has twenty one members and meets bi-monthly. Currently the board is recruited through regular open public appointment processes regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Chief Executive, with the assistance of a senior management team, manages the day to day activities of the Council and reports directly to the Chairperson. The Chief Executive and senior management team also provide progress reports to all Council meetings.

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operation between political, cultural and religious communities in Northern Ireland; and to promote a peaceful and fair society based on reconciliation and mutual trust. It aims to do this by:

- Increasing public awareness of community relations work
- Developing opportunities for cross-community understanding
- Encouraging constructive debate throughout Northern Ireland
- Providing support (finance, training, advice, information) for local groups and organisations

Functions
Subject to the impact of *Together: Building a United Community,* the policy published by the First and Deputy First Minister in May 2013, the current functions that the CRC undertakes as a regional organisation and Non-Departmental Public Body of the Department are:

- assisting Government in the development of its plan and actions for good relations;
- delivering on actions falling to it as a result of those plans;
- promoting, in partnership with Equality Commission NI, good relations actions in the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors, youth sector, church and other faith-based sectors within their respective areas of responsibility;
- providing training and development, support, advice, guidance and a source of specialist expertise to district councils in the development of their good relations plans;
- providing a challenge function to district councils on their good relations plans;
- working in partnership with departments to promote cultural diversity;
- acting as main funding source for voluntary and community organisations to provide innovative community and race relations programmes;
- developing and supporting interventions at interfaces and other 'at risk' areas;
- developing and producing good practice advice;
- commissioning and undertaking research;
- ensuring that best practice in addressing division and the problems of diversity in Northern Ireland is of international standards, and encourage the flow of ideas and practice on North-South, East-West, European and international levels.

Further information on current activities – development, grant and research etc can be found in Appendix 1.

The Committee indicated it would like CRC to focus its input on the following issues:

GOOD RELATIONS IN PRACTICE
It is CRC's opinion that Together Building a United Community (TBUC) must develop as a new and progressive discourse, with innovative and ambitious actions that will continue to address the legacy of the past and assist in building a shared and reconciled society.

CRC supports a wide range of organisations engaged in promoting, building and sustaining good community relations. This is supported through CRC's core funding

grant scheme, its community relations and cultural diversity grant scheme, OFMdFM's District Council Good Relations Programme, as well as working with regional bodies and stakeholders.

Activities supported fall under a number of themes and include:

- Interfaces (Urban) and development of shared spaces (area planning and design);
- Interfaces (rural) & contested spaces and development of shared spaces (area planning and design;
- Shared spaces – venue provision;
- Faith based work;
- Cultural celebrations & commemorations-*flags, parades, bonfires, emblems & work with institutions;*
- Policing & Community Safety;
- Addressing the legacy of the past;
- Identity based work-Women, Young adults (18+) and Single identity work;
- Sectarianism (tackling attitudes, intimidation and violence).

We are happy to provide further detail on these activities during the course of the evidence session.

CRC's recent engagement with our supported groups, along with interested stakeholders, has drawn attention to a number of issues that would be useful for the Committee to consider during the Inquiry. Some of this relates to issues already covered in CRC's submission e.g.

- Delays in implementation. It is over a year and a half since the policy was first announced but there is little activity on the ground.
- Financial implications. There are serious financial implications with the loss/reduction of international funders and the constrictive domestic funding situation i.e. a reduced infrastructure, and an over-reliance on a smaller cohort of organisations and key individuals;
- Local Government. There is a need to ensure that the new 11 District Councils have equality and good relations at the forefront of everything they do.
- Regional Co-ordination. Regional co-ordination of community relations work is required, which should bring together and synchronize interventions at regional government level along with district councils and community initiatives.
- Sectarianism and Racism. Sectarianism and racism should be tackled in an effective and co-ordinated way. This is particularly important bearing in mind budget restraints imposed on Departments and their agencies which may impact negatively on tackling sectarianism and racism (for example, recent concerns expressed by PSNI around the negative impact of budget cuts in relation to policing interface areas).

Again we are happy to expand on these issues during the evidence session.

FUNDING

Peace-building must undergo a re-prioritisation within government and should result in a resource review and the commitment of adequate resources. This includes urgent support for groups on the ground vital to implementing TBUC actions. A major rethink of how larger and significant budgets such as education, housing, community development, regeneration, justice and culture intersect and present opportunities for reconciliation and peace-building is also necessary. Without this pledge and a priority review TBUC will not be plausible, and commitments to reconciliation and peace building are likely to remain merely piecemeal.

Strong sustainable infrastructure will develop and safeguard positive community relations. Declining and inadequate funding, as well as delays associated with release of Government funding delivery is leading to a diminishing and fractured sector. It is critical that government consider both current and long term consequences of a reduced sector, such as 'How can peace building work continue in the current climate where experienced staff and good projects have closed, or are at risk of closure?' and 'Who will be left to implement TBUC on the ground?'

Future funding must move from piecemeal to long term community based activity based on hard indicators with results that are outcome based. The outcome of the Good Relations Funding Review should detail OFMDFM's commitment to sustainable, long-term resource allocation for community relations, reconciliation and peace-building activity and CRC recommends that the Committee call for the publication and full consultation on the review findings as part of this inquiry.

GOOD RELATIONS INDICATORS

Indicators must act as a key stimulus for further change and should inform how much is being done and how well it is being done i.e. is society better off? The development of appropriate indicators and outcomes therefore provide an opportunity to strategically consider how societies are building peace, and what else needs to be done.

CRC's strategic interest in monitoring and evaluating peace building activities is reflected in a number of activities. Firstly, we carry out internal evaluations to and use this information to map progress in the building and development of good community relations. Secondly, CRC has also recently undertaken a 3 year (2012-2014) independent review of the condition and impact of the peace process in Northern Ireland. This appraisal was independently funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and resulted in the publication of three Peace Monitor Reports[2]. As previously stated the first report appeared in February 2012 and drew mainly on statistics that are in the public domain but which had not been previously assembled across the wide range of issues affecting life here[3]. Detailed and statistical evidence was gathered across four dimensions - security, equality, political progress, and cohesion and sharing. This annual monitoring provided a mechanism to measure the distance we have travelled either closer to or further away from the shared goal of a peaceful and inclusive society.

[2] Under A Shared Future Strategy CRC was tasked with preparing a three-year assessment on the 'health' of community relations in Northern Ireland – this assessment would form part of the Government's main triennial report which the Assembly would be invited to consider, debate and report. This aspect was not taken forward by the local administration but CRC has been able to carry forward the concept of independent assessment with the support of JRCT & JRF.

[3] Where official statistics did not tell the full picture survey-based data was also used.

Given our strategic interest in this work, CRC contributed to the Good Relations Indicator Review 2013/2014 both as members the various thematic advisory sub-groups, as well as by a formal written submission. CRC's submission agreed with the development of high level indicators, thereby enabling a review against strategic objectives, but stressed the importance of being very clear as to what outcome was being sought, and then setting out how this would be achieved. CRC's formal response drew attention to the Outcomes-Based Accountability model highlighting it as a useful process for devising outcomes which would be useful for further consideration by the department.

In addition to this CRC drew attention to the ambiguity of the consultation i.e. it appeared the intention was to measure proposals put forward in Together: Building a United Community, yet this would prove difficult given the lack of published detail on programme activity under each of the priorities.

However, if the intention was a wider measuring of good relations i.e. additional to TBUC, then CRC was of the strong view that the department, and consequently the indicators must then address how other elements of peace building work would be monitored and presented. CRC concluded that a TBUC *only* approach would be restrictive and would result in an incomplete picture on the health of good relations in our society, and CRC recommended comprehensive monitoring that included a broad range of programme activity such as schemes and projects from across the Executive that are outside the TBUC sphere e.g. DE's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy and its corresponding Enhancement Scheme, as well as making efforts to include *all* peace-building programmes.

CRC made a number of general recommendations during the consultation period. Appendix 2.

Appendix 1
CRC CURRENT ACTIVITIES

DEVELOPMENT and SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

1. Decade of Commemorations - A major focus for the CRC's work in recent years has been on supporting new ways to engage with commemoration to ensure that our divided past does not undermine our ability to build a shared future. The Decade of Commemorations project was established in 2011/2012 in collaboration with the Heritage Lottery Fund. Through the project key principles for remembering centenaries in the public space were developed and these were widely disseminated to government, agencies, councils, culture, heritage and interested groups. Council particularly welcomed the fact that the DCAL Minister, Caral Ni Chuilín embraced these principles on behalf of the Executive. A ten week Lecture series on Remembering the Future, commemorating the Decade 1912-22, was organised by CRC and the Heritage Lottery Fund and launched in March 2012. Since then CRC and HLF have hosted regular meetings/events of agencies/organisations working on these issues, including a 'Remembering 1916' Conference (November 2013); CRC has attended a number of commemorative events for example Cross of Sacrifice of the Commonwealth Graves (laying of foundation stone and dedication in Glasnevin Cemetery), and is involved with the WW1 Commemoration (NI) Committee. Furthermore, CRC & HLF host the 'Commemorations Roundtable'. In addition to this engagement activity a number of resources have been gathered and made available on the web-site including 'Reflections on Remembering the Future Conference' (2012), a 'Good Practice Toolkit (2013), and 'Funding Advice' note for funders (2011/12). These publications can be located at http://www.community-relations.org.uk/programmes/marking-anniversaries/

2. Other support for policy development
   CRC provides advice and a hub for the exchange of learning and best practice. The engagement between policy, practice and reflective evaluation remains critical to CRC and CRC uses this knowledge to influence the thinking, action and strategic approach of stakeholders, decision makers and influencers. In order to support this aim CRC's policy programme has produced policy comment on a range of thematic areas including shared housing, shared space, cultural matters, education and interfaces. The organisation's policy comment is based on evidence and experience, and ultimately aims to influence the design of public policy that will deliver change and progress.

   CRC works closely with interface community partners and other agencies in seeking local agreement to reduce the number of peace walls and we provide guidance about agency processes to address changes in interfaces. CRC also co-ordinates the Interface Community Partners (ICP) which provides a mechanism to facilitate dialogue between the various interface groups across Belfast. Its membership includes representatives from a range of statutory organisations e.g. Northern Ireland Housing Executive, PSNI, and the Department of Social Development. The ICP is aligned with the Inter-Agency Group (IAG) which is led and coordinated by the Department of Justice. In addition, CRC facilitates a 'Beyond Belfast' discourse with rural stakeholders thereby ensuring the issue of 'invisible' barriers is also given priority in policy development.

3. Research: In addition to funding research and the Peace Monitoring Report (detailed elsewhere in this briefing) twice yearly CRC produces a journal '*Shared Space'* which focuses on recent relevant community relations research commissioned by CRC or others. All previous editions of *Shared Space* can be found on CRC's web-site.

4. Learning and Development Events: CRC delivers a full programme of conferences, seminars and other events to encourage learning and best practice. This includes organising thematic events on issues such as faith-based activity, cultural celebrations, dealing with the legacy of the past, and identity based work. In addition to this CRC promotes and hosts an annual Community Relations Week each year. 2014's theme of ''Finish the Job' included CRC's annual Policy Conference, as well as over 200 events (an increase on the 170 in the previous year) organised and attended by civic society. For the first time, all 26 district councils planned events, an indication of the improving levels of commitment and expertise within local government regarding peace-building and reconciliation, albeit that there is quite a diverse picture across the region.

5. New Media: Beyond conferences and events, CRC continues to promulgate best practice through its web-site and for more immediate issues, increasingly through the newer communication channels of Facebook and Twitter[4].

A. GRANT ACTIVITIES

CRC is a regional funder of community relations work. Based on the current *draft* Annual Report for 2013-14 over £2M in grants were paid out by CRC with the support of OFMDFM. The Council has a variety of funding schemes each tailored to promote certain aspects of community relations:

1. Core Funding Grant Scheme: The Programme's annual budget (£1,345,650 - 2013/14) contributes towards the salary and running costs of organisations which are considered of strategic importance in promoting community relations work in Northern Ireland. The organisations and the nature of work which have previously been supported by the Core Funding Programme are publicised in the Council's annual report which is available at www.nicrc.org.uk. A total of 26 groups are currently in receipt of this support and examples of these include peace and reconciliation centres, those involved in mediation and conflict transformation, training, community arts, church based work on reconciliation themes and interface projects.

2. Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Grant Scheme: This is a fund of approximately £470,000 which helps community/voluntary groups throughout Northern Ireland to develop their capacity to engage in community relations work and to enhance the community relations potential of projects they undertake. It seeks:

- to develop opportunities for groups to explore *their own cultures, beliefs and traditions*, thus increasing their capacity to develop relationships of trust with those of different traditions and values;

[4] 3427 on Twitter/1007 Facebook.

- to develop opportunities for groups to extend their knowledge and understanding *of others' cultures, beliefs, traditions*; increasing their acceptance of and respect for diversity;
- to enable groups to challenge stereotypes of their own and other communities in order to acknowledge and address difference; to increase the ability and confidence of groups and organisations to identify and address those issues that divide them;
- to develop networks of communication, trust and co-operation between divided communities and to promote models of good practice for community relations work in Northern Ireland.

The scheme is aimed at locally based groups such as community development groups, cultural organisations, women's groups, church groups, tenants associations and other organisations and groups involved in community relations, reconciliation projects and cultural engagement. The maximum award payable for each grant is £10,000.

3. Research: This Scheme has an available budget of up to £50,000 per annum to undertake research into community relations issues. 2012/13's research focused on two thematic areas: 'What role do/could historical commemorations play in promoting good relations and providing an opportunity for inter-community dialogue? and 'In what ways do changes in people's everyday behaviours help to create a new culture of accommodation?' As a result of these research calls CRC supported 'Earl Storey who produced *'Moving Beyond the Pale - The Church and a Decade of Historic Commemorations'*, and Dr Orna Young published *'New media and young people in interface areas of Belfast'*. Copies of these research reports are available upon request.

4. Media Grant Scheme: This scheme assists with the development and dissemination of Community Relations resources via print, broadcast or other widely accessible media. The maximum budget available under this scheme is £40,000.

5. Publications Grant Scheme: This scheme aims to encourage the production and dissemination of publications that will contribute to greater understanding and better community relations in Northern Ireland. The maximum award payable for this grant is £5,000.

OTHER FUNDING SUPPORT

1. OFMdFM District Council Good Relations Programme: CRC has an officer who works full time on advising and supporting OFMdFM on the delivery of the District Council Good Relations Programmes. This Programme is currently being aligned with *Together: Building a United Community* and preparation is also underway for the structural changes to Councils arising from reform of local government due to be implemented in April 2015.

   In its wider work, CRC is also preparing to support the new Councils. Establishing trust and confidence in the treatment of equality and good relations at district council level will be a very important aspect of the structural reform. It will also be an important part of this stage of the wider peace process.

2. EU PEACE PROGRAMME: CRC has delivered EU funding since 1995 under Peace I, Peace II, Peace II extension, and Peace III (the latter in collaboration with Pobal until December 2013). Under the Peace III Programme, the Consortium was contracted to support SEUPB in the delivery of Measure 1.1 with District Councils – Building positive relations at the local level; and to directly implement Measure 1.2 – Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past.

3. INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND: In 2013-14 CRC delivered £1.6M on behalf of the International Fund for Ireland through the 'Community Bridges Programme' and the 'Peace Walls Programme' on behalf of the Fund. The 'Peace Walls Programme' continues but is now directly administered by the Secretariat of the International Fund for Ireland. The 'Community Bridges Programme' was designed by CRC to build on the community relations, reconciliation and cross-border ethos of the Fund with an emphasis on promoting the capacity of communities to address issues of difference and division. The Programme supported projects with the potential to make a significant contribution to reconciliation and the emergence of a shared and peaceful future. As it begins to curtail its funding operations in the region, the International Fund for Ireland closed this programme in 2013 along with others.

Appendix 2
CRC's submission to OFMDFM's Good Relations Indicator Consultation – Recommendations Extract.

Indicators must act as a key stimulus for further change and should inform how much is being done and how well it is being done i.e. is society better off? CRC made the following recommendations:

- Research Forum: a research forum should be established and used to identify gaps in the available data and advise on further research needed to create a coherent view of what is happening regarding peace-building (an expansion of the advisory panel).
- Interpretation: peace building is unpredictable and often experiences unexpected set-backs. Consequently it is important to capture the various realities of success so as not to discourage innovation and learning. It is for this reason the interpretation of data is such a critical aspect of monitoring peace as it can provide a wider perspective on how society is benefitting from peace-building activity e.g. impact of symbolic events. If wider interpretation of the data does not occur the framework could end up as a limited compendium of statistics (albeit useful but not as beneficial as it could be). Part of this interpretation would involve tasking each department to provide a yearly analyse of the impact of the work carried out or supported by them, either under TBUC or other programme activity?
- Addressing gaps: Currently the indicators appear to have a regional output. This is useful for a broad sense of progress, but another useful addition would be a geographical breakdown of progress under the various outcomes. The categorisation of data in this format would support local interventions, as well as assisting policy development, particularly for district councils. It is important to note that not all areas experience good relations in the same way, and it is important to be able to carry out comparative analysis and lesson learning within and between different geographies – this could support targeted good relations work on a range of thematic areas e.g. housing, regeneration, education, cultural diversity etc.
- Together Building a United Community Remit. However, if the proposed Good Relations Framework is to be guided by TBUC actions then the following should take place (a) an essential purpose of the good relations indicators is that they map achievements, change and impact. It is therefore necessary that officials devise a framework that charts trend lines across various indicators/outcomes; (b) review the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for *each* of the TBUC actions and replicate/align with a corresponding indicator; (c) engage with the various design teams and delivery bodies to devise data collection methods that will accumulate both quantitative and qualitative data; (d) as programmes develop OFMDFM should develop time series evaluation frameworks – it is important to measure the outcomes for participants within a scaled timeframe.
- CRC recommended further exploration regarding the measurement of attitudinal change across specific TBUC interventions – this additional data would bring added value to quantitative data.
- Statistical data, research and information from evaluations should be considered collectively – a cooperative approach would provide a valuable overview of progress and support engagement on next steps between departments and strategic partners.

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Community Relations Council correspondence

Community Relations Council

Diversity Equity Interdependence

JI/HS/CEO-CRC-OFMdF/O'Hanlon1012-14(CofComm)

10 December 2014

Ms Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee
OFMdFM
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Dear Kathy,

Thank you for your letter of 4th December. I am responding in relation to the information requested on funding given to the Leadership in a Diverse Society project. The project was awarded £2,000 for a cultural diversity training programme but did not spend the full amount. The group received a first payment of £1,000 on 1st March 2012. A subsequent payment of £62.93 was made on 22nd June following final verification of actual expenditure.

Please feel welcome to contact me if you require further information in relation to this grant.

Yours sincerely,

Jacqueline Irwin
Chief Executive

European Union
European Regional Development Fund
Investing in your future

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Charity Registration No. NIC100
Accredited as a body to which donations may be made by Payroll Giving

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Ms Jacqueline Irwin
Chief Executive
Community Relations Council
6 Murray St
Belfast
BT1 6DN

4 December 2014

Dear Jacqueline,

The Committee would like to thank Peter, Sylvia, Joe and yourself for your briefing as part of the Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community, which Members found very useful.

During the briefing you agreed to provide further information on funding for the Leadership in a Diverse Society project.

A response by 10 January 2015 would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

Co-operation Ireland

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Response by Co-operation Ireland

Date Submitted: October 9, 2014

co-operationireland
working for a future together

1. Introduction

1.1 Co-operation Ireland welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry into Building a United Community currently being undertaken by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. Co-operation Ireland works to advance mutual understanding and respect through practical co-operation. We consistently promote peace-building across the community divide, providing innovative programmes which create opportunities for people to meet, share experiences and collaborate for mutual benefit with those of a different religion or tradition. Our programmes are focussed on:

- Increasing dialogue and understanding and co-operation at a community level
- Increasing opportunities for disengaged communities to participate in cross community programme activity
- Increasing the participation of young people in activities which develop their leadership potential and skills for living in a shared society

2. Good Practice in Addressing Community Division

2.1 Co-operation Ireland uses a range of methodologies and approaches in our work, tailored to the aims and circumstances of participating individuals and groups. Many of our programmes are based on the contact theory model, with the promotion of managed interaction and mutually beneficial co-operation at the core of our approach. Previous research and our own evaluations highlight the positive impact of appropriately structured contact on inter-group relations. In particular, contact has been shown to reduce anxiety about inter-group engagement, increase understanding, and address prejudice and stereotypes. Recent research in Northern Ireland has demonstrated that everyday interaction in mixed communities significantly impacts on inter-group attitudes, with people living in mixed areas more willing to engage in cross-community activity, feeling closer to the other community, and more likely to perceive relations between the communities as fair.[1] In contrast, people living in segregated areas had fewer friends from the other community, were more anxious about cross-community contact, and were more likely to perceive their community as threatened by the other. The research also found that superficial neighbourhood contact led to reduced anxiety about meeting members of the other community and that contact led, over time, to reduced prejudice. 'Indirect contact', where people are aware of others in their community involved in inter-group contact, was also seen to have a beneficial impact by changing norms about acceptable cross-community interaction and leading, over time, to direct contact.

2.2 Our programmes draw on a range of themes and vehicles for building relationships and supporting attitudinal change. Arts-based/creative approaches have proved particularly effective in facilitating exploration and discussion of difficult issues by encouraging perspective taking, deepening understanding, and promoting empathy. Practical community and active citizenship based activities have also been effective in encouraging recognition of shared interests and developing skills for negotiation and collaboration.

2.3 Addressing community divisions requires sustained, long-term interventions. Limited, intermittent programmes are not capable of bringing about meaningful change in attitudes and behaviour as they do not provide the necessary conditions for building capacity and developing sustainable relations. Effective programmes need to be designed around people's needs and priorities, securing their buy-in by demonstrating relevance to their current circumstances. Crucially, programmes need to have the flexibility to adapt to events and emerging issues and cannot be implemented in a rigid, unresponsive manner. The results of interventions can, given the nature and scale of the issues to be addressed, be uncertain. While effective programmes will be based on existing good practice and practitioner expertise, they also require openness to innovation and risk-taking.

[1] Hewstone et al, 2008. Can Contact Promote Better Relations? Evidence from Mixed and Segregated Areas of Belfast. Belfast: OFMDFM.

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working for a future together

3. Meaning of Good Relations

3.1 The provision of an agreed definition of good relations will be a crucial component of developing a supportive policy framework for the building of a united community. If properly constructed and implemented, an agreed definition can become a driver of change in policy and practice across the public sector and beyond. While we recognise there will be difficulties in finding a formula which can secure broad acceptance, we suggest the following should be key components of any vision for the future of community relations in Northern Ireland:

- Good relations should be understood as a **dynamic, transformative concept**. A shared and cohesive society is based on more than mere tolerance for difference and a settling for separate but equal communal groupings. Instead, the fostering of good relations implies an active repairing of inter-community relationships, a rebuilding of trust, and an overcoming of fears and suspicions. Crucially, it requires a progressive dismantling of the institutions and practices which sustain segregation and sectarianism.

- Related to this, a society characterised by good relations is one which has developed the **capacity to contain and constructively resolve conflict**. The theorist Johan Galtung has described how the development of such a 'peace culture', which legitimises creative, non-violent handling of conflict, is critical to the building of a sustainable peace.[2] In a Northern Ireland context, this requires acceptance of the legitimacy of opposing points of view and a movement away from zero-sum calculations to recognise that honourable compromise is possible.

- **Positive relationships** between individuals from different community and cultural backgrounds, based on meaningful engagement, should be at the core of our conception of good relations. In culturally diverse societies, cross-cutting ties deepen mutual respect and understanding, foster recognition of common interests, and increase awareness of interdependence. While respecting individual freedom of choice, interaction and integration should be the norm in a shared society.

- Good relations are based on, and require, a foundation of **social and economic equality**. Attempts to set up a false opposition between good relations and equality must be avoided.

- The concept of good relations is future-orientated, entailing a **shared vision** for society. While communities can hold divergent long-term aspirations and different narratives of the past, there is recognition of common goals and priorities. There is also agreement on basic principles and values which will govern inter-community relations, regardless of any possible future political and constitutional changes.

- Good relations also imply a **society at ease with itself**, where all share an equal sense of security and belonging. Regardless of background, people feel they have a stake in society and have confidence that their cultural identities are recognised and held in esteem.

3.2 The work of Brandon Hamber and Gráinne Kelly could provide a useful starting point in framing an agreed definition of good relations. While focused on reconciliation, their model remains very relevant to conceptualising community relations in a society emerging from conflict. In addition, valuable insights are available from the experience in Great Britain of developing community cohesion in the context of cultural and ethnic diversity. Key elements in GB definitions include shared aspirations and recognition of commonality, respect and appreciation for diversity, positive relationships and meaningful interaction, equality, a sense of belonging, and a sense of mutual commitments.[3]

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[2] Galtung, Johan, 1996. Peace by Peaceful Means. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

[3] For example, see Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007. Guidance on the Duty to Promote Community Cohesion.



4. Recommendations

4.1 Building a united community in Northern Ireland will require sustained commitment and partnership between government, civil society, and local communities. Given the scale of the challenges to be overcome, progress will be measured in decades not years. The key role of government in this process will be to provide strategic and consistent leadership – to direct, coordinate and resource the efforts of individuals, groups, and organisations on the ground. Publication of Together Building a United Community is a welcome first step towards development of an agreed good relations policy. However, TBUC would be greatly strengthened by incorporating the strategy into an extended 10 to 15 year road map for change which can guide actions over the longer-term and provide milestones against which progress can be assessed. This would include long-term goals and targets for the promotion of integration, building of relationships, and addressing intolerance and prejudice.

Recommendation 1: The Executive should develop a long-term road map for the building of a united community in Northern Ireland, with measurable goals, targets, and milestones for the promotion of integration, building of relationships, and addressing intolerance and prejudice.

4.2 The building of a united community can only be progressed with a supportive policy and institutional framework for good relations. While work is currently on-going to implement the infrastructural changes proposed under TBUC, the provision of an agreed definition of good relations will be essential to guide and transform policy and practice across the public sector and beyond. This would give substance to the proposed introduction under TBUC of an enhanced good relations section for Equality Impact Assessment in all policy areas across government. In addition, an agreed definition of good relations would inform assessment of progress towards a united community and assist target development.

Recommendation 2: The Executive should, following public consultation, develop an agreed definition of good relations to guide policy and practice across the public and private sector and inform monitoring of progress towards the building of a united community.

4.3 While public policy and practice have key roles to play in creating a momentum towards a united community, real change can only come about through a shift in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals and groups across Northern Ireland. Initiatives, including those proposed under TBUC, which address divisions and provide opportunities for greater cross-community interaction will be central to this process. However, on the ground change will also require the development of a supportive institutional structure for good relations at local level. There is a need to build capacity for communities to network and work together around common issues, raising confidence and developing skills to collaborate, resolve conflicts, and engage positively with diversity. This will require the nurturing of the next generation of community leaders and equipping them with the skills and perspectives necessary for working with others in a shared society. In particular, there is a need to support the development of alternative leadership structures in areas still under paramilitary influence.

Recommendation 3: The Executive and other funders should develop and resource sustainable, flexible, and innovative initiatives to build capacity at community-level for working together in a shared society, including supporting development of the next generation of community leaders.

Department for Employment and Learning

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Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chair
Committee for the Office
Of the First Minister and
Deputy First Minister
Room 285
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BT4 3XX

Our Ref: COR/394/14

7 October 2014

Dear Mr Nesbitt,

Thank you for your letter of 7 July seeking evidence for the Committee's inquiry into the Good Relations Strategy *"Together: Building a United Community."*

As you know this Department is leading on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive regarding the development and delivery of the United Youth Programme which is one of the flagship interventions within the Strategy. Our experience of the co-design process which we inherited from OFMDFM but developed further may be of interest to the Inquiry, particularly with regard to examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration.

There is no standard co-design approach but in essence it means involving end users and programme deliverers in every stage of the policy/programme design process. Not only does this help to identify what works but it secures buy-in from key stakeholders from the outset.

There has been huge interest in the United Youth Programme and much enthusiasm for the development approach we have adopted which offers freedom for potential providers, including voluntary and community groups to present their ideas on what works and why it works. This is essentially an open approach in which all interested parties are engaged in all parts of the process from beginning to end. In other TBUC areas which are highly sensitive, e.g. removal of interface barriers and the development of shared spaces and services, an open approach probably offers the best chance of securing community buy-in to any proposals for change.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

people:skills:jobs:

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

FIONA STANLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

[redacted] people:skills:jobs:

Department for Regional Development

CENTRAL MANAGEMENT BRANCH

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Your reference: DALO/D65/2014
Our reference: SUB769/2014

02 October 2014

Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chairperson
Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Room 285 Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Dear Mr Nesbitt

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Please find attached written evidence to the above Inquiry for the Department for Regional Development.

The Written Evidence sets out the Department's responsibilities regarding good relations, shared space and services.

This letter and enclosure is fully disclosable under FOI. This letter has been copied to the Clerk of the Regional Development Committee.

Yours sincerely

ALAN DOHERTY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

1

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Written evidence submitted by the Department for Regional Development (DRD).

Overview of Department

DRD and its Arm's Length Bodies maintain and develop the infrastructure for Northern Ireland. This includes water and sewerage networks, roads and footpaths, and public transport services.

The range of functions carried out by DRD include:

- regional strategic planning and development policy;
- transport strategy and sustainable transport policy;
- provision and maintenance of all public roads;
- public transport policy and performance;
- certain policy and support work for air and sea ports; and
- policy on water and sewerage services and management of the Department's share-holder interest in Northern Ireland Water (NIW).

Written evidence to address the Terms of Reference

1	**Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:** • **an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services.**
1.1	A Section 75 Equality of Opportunity Screening Analysis Form is required to be completed on all new departmental policies and strategies to determine if an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is required. One of the key considerations when completing the Screening Analysis Form, is the impact that the policy or strategy might have on good relations and any of the Section 75 groups. All finalised screening forms are: • Published on the Department's website; and • Quarterly updates of completed forms are issued to over 100 voluntary and charitable organisations, on the Department's mailing list, who we consider to be 'Section-75 stakeholders'.

2

Due consideration is given to any feedback made by the organisations following sight of the screening forms.

Strategies that have required a full EQIA and have been considered to have had an impact on good relations are detailed below.

- **The New Approach to Regional Transportation**
  The replacement for the Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-12, The New Approach to Regional Transportation, seeks to support the Executive's commitment to Building a Strong and Shared Community through better designed transportation networks which bring communities together and ensure equitable access to key services and facilities, particularly by sustainable modes. A key element of the vision for transportation set out in this New Approach is to have a transportation system which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone's quality of life.

  All potential transport interventions submitted for consideration under the Departmental Spending Plan for 2016-19 were priority assessed on their compatibility with a wide number of criteria, including the potential to build better relations within and between communities through promoting equitable access to key services and facilities, including tourist, cultural and recreational sites.

- **Regional Development Strategy (RDS) (2035)**
  The EQIA carried out on the revised RDS identified several aspects of the strategy as potentially impacting positively on good relations.
  There are key positive impacts within the guidance on Society, Economy, Londonderry and Belfast. This is due to the involvement in the strategy of promotion of community integration in order to share services and facilities. Regional Guidance 6 is called 'Strengthen Community Cohesion'. Within it, communities are encouraged to work together in a co-ordinated approach towards urban renewal and regeneration and to achieve balanced communities. In addition a better integrated transport system can help to promote a stronger more cohesive community.

3

- **Rapid Transit**

  DRD carried out an EQIA of the proposals for Belfast Rapid Transit. Following public consultation, the Final EQIA was published in April 2012. The EQIA concluded that the Belfast Rapid Transit proposals are likely to be positive for good relations.

  This will be due to Belfast Rapid Transit allowing for better access to and between East Belfast, West Belfast, Titanic Quarter and the city centre for everyone. It will provide frequent cross-city services linking East and West Belfast. This has the potential to reduce barriers between communities, promote greater integration and build a more cohesive city.

- **Draft Bicycle Strategy**

  The DRD Draft Bicycle Strategy sets out a vision "to establish a cycling culture in Northern Ireland to give people the freedom and confidence to travel by bicycle, and where all road users can safely share space with mutual respect".

  A key element of the strategy is a focus on public spaces and creating a desire to spend time in public spaces. It is about improving Northern Ireland for everyone, including those with no particular desire to get on a bicycle.

- **Flags and Emblems**

  With regard to flags and emblems, DRD has signed up to the Joint Protocol on the display of flags in public areas that was launched in 2005. The protocol aimed, with support from communities and their representatives, to address the removal of flags from arterial routes, town centres and from particular locations, such as interface areas or near schools, hospitals and churches.

  The protocol recognises that an effective resolution to the issues surrounding flags and emblems is more likely to be achieved through co-operation with local communities. It requires widespread community

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	support, for the partnership established by the Protocol to be effective. DRD is generally not perceived to be the lead agency under the current protocol. In most cases, other parties such as the PSNI, OFMDFM, NIHE, or DSD are better placed to assume the lead role in arranging for the removal of flags and emblems through their contacts with community groups, local elected representatives and other relevant contacts. When inter agency consultation is required by the protocol, the Agency that is in the most effective position to consult, negotiate or resolve the situation will take the lead, with the PSNI assuming this responsibility, where appropriate. The PSNI also take the lead where the display of any flags or emblems is causing tension, or having a detrimental effect on the quality of life in a community. Under the protocol, Transport NI, when called upon by the lead agency, provides the access equipment and resources to remove unwanted flags, once agreement has been reached on their removal, particularly if their location proves to be inaccessible to members of the community concerned. In doing so, as a responsible employer, Transport NI has to take account of the possible risk to their workers in removing flags and emblems. With regard to the erection of traditional arches, under Article 73 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 the Department has the discretionary power to issue consents in respect of the erection of traditional arches. DRD's primary consideration in determining whether consent should be issued is the safety of all road users. However, it does recognise the differing views that members of the public will have on this issue, depending on their political/religious background.

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2.	**Consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services.**
	Draft Bicycle Strategy The afore mentioned DRD Draft Bicycle Strategy sets out a vision "to establish a cycling culture in Northern Ireland to give people the freedom and confidence to travel by bicycle, and where all road users can safely share space with mutual respect". A key element of the strategy is a focus on public spaces and creating a desire to spend time in public spaces. It is about improving Northern Ireland for everyone, including those with no particular desire to get on a bicycle.
3.	**Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:** • seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed.
	As detailed in feedback on the Flags and Emblems protocol effective resolution is more likely to be achieved thorough co-operation with local communities as it requires widespread community support for the protocol to be effective.
4.	**Examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers.**
	Liaison with communities and representatives plays an important part in the operation of the flag protocol. The protocol recognises that an effective resolution to the issues surrounding flags and emblems is more likely to be achieved thorough co-operation with local communities. It requires widespread community support for the partnership established by the protocol to be effective.

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5.	**Consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.**
	None of the Good Relations Indicators relate to DRD's specific functions. **Regional Development Strategy** The RDS 2035 annual Progress Report provides information on the 'provision' of shared space, how the local councils will involve the community in local planning, provision of mixed housing and community engagement. However, the indicators used by OFMDFM seek to measure 'use' of shared space rather than provision. These indicators measure what people think and will therefore require a different method of measurement.
6.	**Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.**
	Any policies/strategies developed to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance to unite communities are more likely to be achieved thorough co-operation with local communities and require widespread community support**.**

Department for Social Development

Department for
Social
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22nd October 2014

Mike Nesbitt, MLA
Chairman
Committee for the Office of the First and deputy First Minister

Dear Mr Nesbitt

Please see attached written evidence from the Department for Social Development in relation to the Committee's Inquiry into "Together: Building a United Community".

If you require any further detail or information from the Department, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

DAVE WALL

Director of Communication Policy and Strategic Support

Summary

1. The Department for Social Development (DSD) has strategic responsibility for urban regeneration, community and voluntary sector development, social legislation, housing, social security benefits, pensions and child support.

2. DSD's vision statement "helping people change their lives for the better" improving the quality of life and well being of our society aligns with the Programme for Government aim of "a shared and better future for all". Tackling sectarianism and promoting good relations is a core element in much of the work of the Department, including our town and city centre regeneration initiatives and our work in housing to support the development of shared neighbourhoods.

3. DSD considers there is evidence of good practice both within the Department (as above) and across the wider Executive, but that progress has been hampered by a number factors, including differential community capacities, the often sporadic allocation of funding for good relations initiatives and the lack of agreed outcomes measures and indicators of success.

4. DSD also considers that progress will continue to be hampered unless our way forward is framed with reference to the challenges and opportunities presented by the changing policy and operational environment. In this context, Local Government Reform (LGR) will present a significant opportunity given that this will transfer operational responsibility for many of the levers to address poverty and disadvantage to the new councils. There should therefore be a renewed focus on the promotion of good relations and tackling sectarianism on the ground.

5. Reflecting these and other views, a summary of the Department's recommendations is as follows:

    - The next Programme for Government should set a clear direction of travel for good relations work across Government;

- We must ensure that funding is targeted at specific outcomes and rigorously monitored to ensure that outcomes are achieved, otherwise we risk continuing to focus on processes to the detriment of delivering real and sustainable change on the ground;

- Departments must commit formally to working together to deliver wider good relations outcomes. There is a need for a coordinated approach to tackle sectarianism, deprivation and racism;

- Section 75 could be strengthened with the requirement to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, and racial group given the same focus by public authorities as the promotion of equality of opportunity;

- There needs to be a shift from a 'one size fits all model' of policy development and funding distribution, to a model which recognises and aims to address the often differential needs of our two main communities.

- Developing a cross departmental policy agenda that seeks to address paramilitarism and the criminality associated with it needs to be a key priority; and

- We need to recognise and utilise the potential of Community Planning to deliver real and lasting change in our most deprived areas.

Response

1. DSD's vision statement "helping people change their lives for the better" improving the quality of life and well being of our society aligns with the Programme for Government aim of "a shared and better future for all". We aim to provide access to decent housing, assist the vulnerable through the welfare system, focus support in the most disadvantaged areas and to bring divided communities together by creating urban centres which are sustainable, welcoming and accessible to live, work and relax in peace.

Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations

2. There is clear evidence of a direct relationship between poverty, disadvantage and segregated communities. This evidence strongly suggests that DSD and the wider Executive will have limited success in its efforts to tackle poverty unless such action also aims to address divisions and promote good relations between communities.

3. The Department recognises that deprivation and division cannot be addressed by government alone but that success is dependent on partnership working across sectors, within and across communities. The Department considers that this will not only ensure that we capitalise on the strengths and skills of communities and all partners but that we deliver initiatives that actually meet the specific and often differential needs of communities.

4. The Renewing Communities initiative (document appended) offers a potential model of good practice in this regard. For instance, this initiative recognised that the Protestant Community had less well developed capacity at community level than their Catholic counterparts and that this negatively impacted on the extent to which Protestant communities capitalised on opportunities offered through government funded programmes and services to tackle disadvantage. It was also highlighted that in terms of educational attainment, a crucial determinant of future life chances, Protestant boys in areas of deprivation consistently lagged behind all other groups.

5. A preliminary evaluation of the Renewing Communities initiative, alongside local anecdotal evidence, suggests that some good results were beginning to emerge. However, success was hampered by the short term nature of many of the projects delivered and, as consequence, many deprived Protestant communities still exhibit that lack of community capacity and continued high rates of educational underachievement. These are priority areas that need to be addressed in order to help these communities out of deprivation and poverty which will, in turn, begin to create the right environment for political stability and long term good relations not just across religious divides but across racial and ethnic divisions.

6. The long term consequences of a failure to address this disadvantage will have damaging consequences for the communities that are so affected. There is therefore an urgency in developing a policy response across government departments that recognises the particular problems of our poorest Protestant and Catholic neighbourhoods. Furthermore, a key element of this response must be to address the paramilitary activity and associated criminality that continues to blight our poorest communities.

7. Local Government Reform (LGR) is also pertinent here as councils will have the power to shape their responses to disadvantage and good relations according to the particular characteristics and needs of local communities. In doing so, LGR through community planning will have the added benefit of moving the focus from neighbourhood level. Currently individual communities shoulder a lot of the responsibility for progressing actions to promote good relations and tackling sectarianism. Community planning must refocus efforts to build good relations across the whole community within council areas with all statutory agencies being held accountable though the community planning process.

Good Practice

8. DSD's work on shared city centre and town centres offers some good examples of best practice. The primary aim of these initiatives is to improve the competitiveness of our towns and cities. However, they have also helped create

more attractive, welcoming and safe environments to be shared by all in recognition that shared space is key to building a united community.

9. Specific examples include:

   - The regeneration of Laganside and Belfast City Centre shared neutral spaces;
   - The Victoria Square Development; and
   - The Peace Bridge in Derry~Londonderry (funded under Peace III).

10. Evidence of the success of these types of initiatives is illustrated through hosting of festivals, international events and increased footfalls in Belfast and Londonderry city centres.

11. Religion is still a key determinant of where people live with some 90% of Housing Executive estates being predominantly single identity. However, evidence, such as, the NI Life and Times Survey indicates that the overwhelming majority of people in NI would prefer to live in mixed neighbourhoods. DSD has taken a number of key steps in order to facilitate and support the development of shared housing, include the Housing Executive's work on shared neighbourhoods which has quietly but effectively begun a process of encouraging, supporting and delivering behaviours in some of our social housing estates that both address sectarianism and build attitudes consistent with good relations.

12. In recognition of the opportunities presented by Local Government Reform and Community Planning, the Department has developed an Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework. This Framework provides a clear policy direction to partners in central and local government and also in the voluntary and community sector in terms of supporting actions to contribute to the promotion of Good Relations.

13. The Framework has at its core the 'Department for Social Development's Corporate Plan 2011-2015' and reflects the strategic priorities therein. The policy

objectives and supporting actions in the Policy Framework reflect the Department's priority "To bring divided communities together by creating urban centres which are sustainable, welcoming and accessible to live, work and relax in peace".

14. Within the Framework, there are 3 policy objectives supporting actions to contribute towards the promotion of Good Relations, for example:

    - *Policy objective 2 – To strengthen the competitiveness of our towns and cities* - has as one of its suggested actions – "supporting the development of shared and safely accessible commercial centres and development sites".

    - *Policy objective 3 – To improve linkages between areas of need and areas of opportunity*- has as one of its suggested actions "Physical regeneration of interface areas, including environmental improvement, remodelling, securing the release of development sites and the agreed removal of interface barriers where this is safe, practicable and desirable".

    - *Policy objective 4 – To develop more cohesive and engaged communities* has as one of its suggested actions – "Strengthening networks and cross-interface schemes to develop positive community responses to social, economic and environmental problems".

15. Looking forward to a post April 2015 context, Councils will be given a statutory duty to have due regard to guidance issued by the Department, including the Policy Framework. This together with Councils' obligations under Section 75 and the Community Planning duties should contribute to good relations considerations becoming an integral part of their work in Urban Regeneration and Community Development.

Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural.

16. Good Relations is about improving community cohesion and removing division across Northern Ireland. There are many challenges attached to this task, some of which have been exacerbated over the years by the role of government.

17. The pattern of residential segregation in NI means that the majority of deprived communities, including Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, are single identity. It could also be argued that government has encouraged these single identity areas to be insular as the primary focus of many of its programmes and projects has been on addressing the causes and consequences of poverty within communities to the expense of encouraging and supporting intercommunity working and tackling sectarianism.

18. Evidence from the recent Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy Evaluation (not yet published) however does provide some useful evidence in relation to best practice in mixed community areas. For example, the evaluation showed that in times of civil unrest (even within those areas with the highest interface conflict) the NR partnership structure allowed individuals from across the divisions to continue to meet and engage with each other and discuss areas of common interest and community need.

19. Partnership working has also proved crucial to other areas of the department's work in interface areas including the NIHE's to work to support communities who wish to remove/reimage barriers.

20. It is however essential that our support for communities does not stop at removing images of sectarianism and violence but that we (government and other agencies) help communities tackle the actual violence itself. This cannot be achieved unless we recognise and address the continuing dominance of paramilitaries in our most deprived areas.

Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

- Good relations work continues to be seen as disconnected from the work of departments; it is an 'add on'rather than something that is factored into every aspect of government policy and services. It is essential that good relations work across government is supported with a clear sense of direction of travel. This must be part of the next Programme for Government;

- We need to take a fresh look at the Good Relations field and associated funding delivery structures with more co-ordination and smarter partnerships. There is a need to be realistic about future spending constraints and what can be achieved with constrained and decreasing resources;

- Sporadic allocation of funding for good relations initiatives has contributed to a lack of strategic direction in terms of focus for activity and has made it extremely difficult to access the actual impacts of such initiatives. These challenges have been exacerbated by the lack of agreed indicators/ measures for success and our lack of focus on monitoring/tracking outcomes. In moving forward we must ensure that funding is targeted at specific outcomes and rigorously monitored to ensure that outcomes are achieved, otherwise we risk continuing to focus on processes to the detriment of delivering real and sustainable change on the ground;

- Government Departments have a responsibility to promote good relations through their policy interventions. Departments must work together to deliver wider good relations outcomes. Central funding should be delivered in a way that is coordinated with and enhances mainstream programmes – such as city centre development and shared housing. There needs to be a recognition of big drivers, such as, housing and education and better "joined up" thinking to maximise the potential of smaller funding initiatives to deliver real and sustainable outcomes;

- Section 75 could be made stronger with the requirement to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, and racial group given the same focus by public authorities as the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- We must refocus efforts to build good relations across the whole community within council areas with all the statutory agencies being held accountable through the community planning process; and
- Paramilitary activity and associated criminality continues to blight our poorest communities. Developing a cross departmental policy agenda that seeks tackle these issues must be a key priority.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Pauline Keegan
Director of Rural Development

7 November 2014

Clerk to the Committee
Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Inquiry Into Building a United Community

Introduction

1. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has not been allocated any funding from the Building a United Community Strategy, nor is it one of the lead departments taking forward headline actions. However the Department, through its Rural Development Division, do report on actions which support the strategy under the Rural Community Development Support Service which is delivered through the local Rural Support Network structure. The Department does not wish to submit oral evidence.

Evidence

2. Part of the Department's commitment to improving community relations and building a united and shared society, as outlined in the strategy, is reflected in the work of the Rural Support Networks (RSNs) which deliver the rural community development support service funded through DARD's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation (TRPSI) programme. Contracts for the delivery of a rural community development support service have been in place with 8 lead service providers since April 2012. As part of these contracts the Networks are required to promote and support measures to alleviate poverty, social isolation and inequality; and improve community relations in rural areas through community engagement. In addition, in 4 contract areas there is a specific requirement to deliver a community development service for the Unionist population living in rural border areas through actions such as: improving inter-community and cross-community relationships by, for example, addressing misconceptions, building trust, creating space for dialogue and discussion. From November 2013 the Department has also provided funding through the DSD Thematic Regional Support for Faith Based Engagement programme for two Project Officers to work in rural areas promoting and supporting the involvement of churches and faith based volunteers in social action projects to alleviate poverty, social exclusion and to improve the quality of life for people living in disadvantaged rural areas.

3. Building good relations within and between communities is at the core of work of the Rural Support Networks. Community Development is the ethos of these organisations and they believe that good solid community development cannot be built without underlying good relations between groups and communities. The work that the RSN's undertake in relation to supporting individuals and groups to avail ofRural Development Programme (RDP) funding and the other TRPSI programmes and projects has contributed to community confidence and improvements in the lives of those living in the rural communities. The thematic events that they organise regularly to review the impact of social policy changes are well attended by the community groups from all areas and present opportunities to develop inter community relationships.

4. The Department are members of the 'Beyond Belfast' group which represents the views of rural stakeholders in relation to good relations. As part of Community Relations Week in June 2014 a Conference was held with the theme of "Together Building a United Community – Looking Beyond Belfast". The key messages that came from the conference and which we support in relation to this inquiry were:

- The Strategy has had little obvious impact on "rural" to date with the perception in the rural areas is that the programme is too urban centred.
- Strict adherence to rural proofing of all programmes/projects being funded under this strategy needs to be undertaken.
- "Good Relations" needs an agreed accepted definition with a consistent set of standards and a code of practice for good relations funding.
- Good Relations needs to be central to the Community Plans being drawn up by local authorities.

5. I apologise for the delay in getting this information to you.

Pauline Keegan
Director of Rural Development

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Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Department of
Culture, Arts and Leisure

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Our ref: **COR/214/2014**

26 September 2014

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chairperson
Committee for the Office of the
First Minister & deputy First Minister
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST BT4 3XX

Dear Mr Nesbitt,

Re: OFMDFM COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

In response to your letter of July 2014 regarding the OFMDFM Committee Inquiry into Building a United Community, please see attached the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure (DCAL's) response which provides an overview of current and planned projects which demonstrate how the promotion of good relations is an important priority for DCAL, and provides important linkage with the Department's work on promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion.

Yours sincerely

Pat Wilson
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Enc

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Annex A

Written Evidence to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL)

Introduction

1. The promotion of good relations is an important priority for DCAL, and links with the Department's work on promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion. DCAL continues to be involved in a wide range of projects which aim to produce positive good relations outcomes. This paper sets out some examples of good practice; current projects the Department is taking forward to address division and feedback it has received on engaging with communities on good relations work.

Bringing Divided Communities Together

2. DCAL has taken forward a diverse array of projects which have contributed to the good relations agenda, for example:

3. Midnight Street Soccer (MSS) is a community football project for young people aged 12 – 17, which was originally developed by the North Belfast Play Forum in 2004. The programme was initially established to prevent sectarian youth led violence in flashpoint areas of North Belfast. The success of MSS has seen it expanded into a regional programme funded by Sport NI, with locations throughout the north of Ireland. In 2012-13 the target of 500 participants was greatly exceeded with 771 young people engaging with the project. These young people participated in seven sessions per venue, totalling 70 sessions. This was followed by a session with 44 teams, made up of 372 people from across the north of Ireland taking part in a Midnight Street Soccer finals event in Magherafelt. MSS was warmly received by its participants, 98 per cent of whom said that they enjoyed taking part in the programme. Feedback from the organisers and facilitators was also very positive.

4. Beyond Skin is an organisation which uses music, arts and media to assist in the building and development of cultural relations in the north, within the overall aim of addressing issues of racism and sectarianism. The Arts Council funds 'World Music Interactive Education Programme', a project delivering high energy World Music & Dance participative events across the north and aiming to promote inter-cultural dialogue & global arts. Facilitated by musicians representing various cultures, the programme uses music and dances as a tool to encourage engagement of new audiences especially those in disadvantaged and rural areas.

5. The Droichead Project, which was part of the City of Culture events programme, was a cross community project which brought together communities to ensure the Fleadh, Tattoo and Pan Celtic Festival showcased both traditional Irish and Ulster-Scots marching bands culture. It was a key part of the efforts to ensure the City of Culture was truly inclusive. Careful, professionally structured consultation with Fleadh participants, organisers and the Londonderry Bands Forum, individual bands and band members resulted in agreement to participate in the Fleadh and for the first time in its history, the event included marching band performances. The project arranged for a PSNI band to perform for the first time in uniform in public during the Fleadh. Participants recorded that their perceptions changed radically as a result of the collaboration. As a result of partnerships established, marching bands performed as part of the Pan Celtic Festival in April 2014 in Waterloo Place for the first time in 50 years (Pan Celtic was supported by DCAL as part of the City of Culture legacy actions). A short film is in development to promote the good relations outcomes to marching bands and traditional Irish music communities across the north of Ireland.

6. The ArtsEkta 'Belfast Suitcases' project brought together a group of the City's younger and older citizens to explore and celebrate the social diversity of the new multi-cultural Belfast. The main groups involved in the project were older people from the settled Indian Community in Belfast and women from the Islamic community. The project helped to address concerns

around isolation and increasing perceptions and fear of racist attitudes. The project further developed to include groups working with cross-community groups and the LBGT community.

7. The 3 year Cultural Awareness Strategy seeks to address historical tensions between the two main communities in the north of Ireland in the context of a shared and better future and to develop greater tolerance, understanding and respect for different cultural traditions. The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland and the Ulster Council of the Gaelic Athletic Association have been implementing projects which attempt to reduce distrust and misunderstanding under the Cultural Awareness Strategy since July 2012. In 2013/14 they have each exceeded their targets of delivering four events to organisations/groups within the community they are linked to and eight events to organisations/groups within the community linked to the other cultural tradition, which were open to persons from all Section 75 categories.

8. These examples illustrate the power of art, sport and culture to promote and bring about positive changes in relationships between divided groups and communities. A further recent example is that of boxer Carl Frampton who has attracted huge support across the communities of the north of Ireland and highlights clearly the power of sport to positively transform attitudes and behaviours.

Addressing Division

9. DCAL is currently taking forward the development of further projects to promote good relations, most notably through the delivery of a cross community youth sports programme under the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

10. The pilot project for this programme will be delivered in 2014/15 and will seek to proactively and innovatively tackle good relations issues through the medium of sport. This project will focus on 11-16 years olds from all sections of the community but will specifically seek to attract female, ethnic minority and disabled participants to the programme. Sport can provide our young people with the values, discipline, resilience and confidence to succeed on and off the pitch and indeed to become ambassadors in their age groups and in their communities. The pilot project and subsequent wider cross community youth sports programme will seek to use sport to deliver a meaningful and sustained impact on good relations.

11. The power of sport to promote good relations will be explored further in a piece of research Sport NI has recently commissioned from University of Ulster to identity good practice in the area of ‘Sport and Good Relations’. It is anticipated that this research will improve knowledge, understanding and leadership in relation to the promotion of good relations within sport by providing governing bodies and sports organisations with the necessary training, support and resources required to actively promote equality and good relations and address barriers to these within their organisations.

12. The Wheelworks ArtCart will be upgraded to a unique, fully accessible mobile arts vehicle which has the latest software and digital technology. ArtCart brings innovative programmes to isolated and rural groups who would otherwise never encounter such inspiring and stimulating digital arts technologies, skilled tutors and interesting programmes. Its mission is to bring arts opportunities to Section 75 groups so almost all the young people it targets experience some element of disadvantage whether it be poverty, discrimination, homophobic bullying or life traumas. The ArtCart develops young people’s skills through the delivery of diverse activity while addressing important issues such as diversity, acceptance, inclusion, civic responsibility and respect. Its programmes evolve to meet the needs and demands of all potential participants, such as the homeless, the travelling community and asylum seekers. ArtCart will continue to not only deliver services to single identity communities, but delivers cross-community/inter-community work in rural, urban and interface areas.

13. Tapestry of Colours Online Educational resource was designed to highlight the complexity of inter-culturalism issues and the fusion of cultures emerging in the North of Ireland. Funded by DCAL through NI Screen, its aim is to increase cultural understanding and insights at a

personal level as well as having the potential to change attitudes in a significant number of young people and adults.

Community Engagement

14. DCAL's experience is that the involvement of the communities themselves in policy development is critical where integration and good relations are concerned. Community groups and community leaders are best placed to understand the particular challenges and opportunities facing their area. Collaborative partnership working on policy planning and development is a key factor is obtaining community buy in and ownership of a good relations project.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
September 2014

Department of Education

Department of Education
www.deni.gov.uk
AN ROINN Oideachais
MÄNNYSTRIE O Lear

FROM: **VERONICA BINTLEY**
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Date: 24 September 2014

To: Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chair to the Committee for the Office of the
First Minister and deputy First Minister

INQUIRY INTO BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

1. I refer to your letter dated 7 July 2014 inviting individuals and organisations to submit written evidence to an inquiry into Building a United Community.

2. Please see attached submission from the Department of Education.

Veronica

VERONICA BINTLEY
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SUBMISSION TO OFMDFM COMMITTEE BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY INQUIRY

Introduction

1. The Department of Education (DE) welcomes the focus on building a united community as a means of tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance as set out in the Executive's Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy.

2. Rebuilding a strong and vibrant society is a role for the whole of Government, but there is a valuable contribution that education can play and one that must be achieved if the next generation is to learn from and avoid the mistakes of the past.

3. There has been a long history of community relations work in schools and youth organisations throughout the period of conflict, from the formal public statement in the early 1980s to the Department's most recent Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education policy introduced in 2011.

4. **Curricular**
   The early years, schools and youth work curricula provide ample opportunity for addressing sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance. Within school settings, the minimum curricula content for Personal Development and Mutual Understanding at primary level and Local and Global Citizenship at post-primary level, requires schools to actively address issues of sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance. Similar opportunities are provided in the Curricular Guidance for pre-school education through Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

   Additionally, at post-primary level, the minimum content for all curricular areas includes 'developing pupils as contributors to society' providing opportunity to address citizenship and cultural understanding. The Youth Service has a long history of addressing community relations and diversity issues through the model of youth work practice that includes equality, diversity and independence as part of its core values.

5. Policy

5.1 The Department's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education policy seeks to support and underpin the curriculum and other policy areas. The specific aim of the policy is to improve relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination.

5.2 The policy provides formal and non-formal educational opportunities for children and young people to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions. Funding is provided through the Education & Library Board's CRED Enhancement Scheme to schools and youth work settings, as well as through the Youth Council NI to regional voluntary youth organisations. Guidance was issued to early years, schools and youth work settings in 2011 and a dedicated website provides information, case study material and resources for practitioners.

5.3 Funding is also provided through the policy to ensure teachers and youth workers have the necessary skills to address community relations, equality and diversity issues, including handling sensitive and controversial issues. A significant number of teachers have availed of the training to date.

5.4 A formal review the policy by the Education & Training Inspectorate is scheduled in 2014/15, to assess its impact and to inform future policy implementation and development. As part of the monitoring indicators, the Department commissioned a module within the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey, the results of which suggest the policy was having a positive impact on attitudes of young people. The module is due to be repeated in the 2014 survey.

5.5 The CRED policy is therefore a key enabler to some commitments within the T:BUC strategy, in particular the development of an anti-sectarianism module and associated teacher training and the buddy scheme. Proposals on how the CRED policy can facilitate these commitments have been made to OFMdFM officials.

5.6 Other educational policies, such as Special Educational Needs and the Newcomer policy also assist in addressing the needs of young people and building support for their integration into society.

6. Shared Education

6.1 In addition, the Department is leading on the Programme for Government Commitments to advance shared education as a mechanism to improve educational and reconciliation outcomes. The Department welcomes the recognition given to shared education within the Executive's T:BUC strategy.

6.2 One of the headline actions in the T:BUC is a commitment to commence ten Shared Education Campuses in the next five years. Work on developing the new campuses is being taken forward by the Department of Education under the Shared Education Campuses programme.

6.3 The T:BUC Shared Education Campuses initiative is seen as complementing the work already underway in schools and will be targeted towards infrastructure projects aimed at improving or facilitating educational sharing initiatives within local schools. It is intended therefore that projects selected will build on a solid foundation of existing sharing.

6.4 The Education Minister, John O'Dowd, launched the Shared Education Campuses programme in January 2014. There was a significant level of interest in the first call for Expressions of Interest to the programme, with sixteen applications received. The Minister announced the first three projects to be supported under the programme on 1 July 2014 and the projects are proceeding to the planning stage. It is anticipated that a second call for Expressions of Interest will open towards the end of September 2014.

6.5 There may be additional ancillary benefits arising from the establishment of these new facilities, including increased opportunities for use by the wider community for a range of educational, sporting, recreational, arts or cultural activities, in line with the Department's *Community Use of School Premises: A Guidance Toolkit for Schools.*

7. Integrated Education

7.1 In addition the Department has a statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education. It responds to parental demand, and funds integrated schools that are robust, do not involve unreasonable expenditure and meet specified criteria. Integrated education, together with all types of education, makes a vital and valuable contribution to building a peaceful and stable future for our children. Going forward, the Department of Education will ensure that it continues to have a rigorous approach to its duty to integrated education.

7.2 The Department's vision of ensuring that every learner achieves his or her full potential at each stage of development is supported through the Sustainable Schools strategy Policy and the area planning process. Both promote the need for a vibrant and sustainable education system. A strong education system has the potential to play a positive role in the normalising of society and promoting greater sharing amongst communities.

Department of Justice

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER

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Our ref: SUB/1258/2014

Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chairman
Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Room 285
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Belfast.
BT4 3XX

21 October 2014

Dear Mike

INQUIRY INTO BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's inquiry into Building a United Community. In particular, I would like to focus on one aspect of your Terms of Reference for the inquiry, namely "seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed".

My Department has been working, with some success, in this area through our Programme for Government Commitment 68 "to seek local agreement to reduce the number of peace walls". We have reduced the number of interface structures that we have responsibility for from 59 to 53, with further reductions planned. Since devolution of policing and justice functions, strong relationships have been established with all of the key stakeholders and, importantly, trust has been established at a community level in many areas. Naturally, I am eager for us to build on that success.

[redacted]

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The "Together: Building a United Community Strategy" has the potential to be a vehicle to do that. However, there remain challenges which need to be overcome if we are to achieve the removal of all structures by 2023.

Background

At the outset of devolution of justice, the Department of Justice assumed responsibility for 59 interface structures from the Northern Ireland Office. Cupar Way was the first barrier to be erected. It was a temporary wooden and barbed wire structure erected by the Army to separate communities in 1969. It is the longest barrier stretching to 650m long.

Between the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and 2008 eight new fences and one security gate were put in place. The last barrier erected was in 2008 at Hazelwood Integrated Primary School.

The structures maintained by the Department are located as follows:

Location	No. Walls/fences	No. Gates	TOTAL
East Belfast	4	0	4
West Belfast	12	6	18
North Belfast	14 (15)	4 (5)	18 (20)
North West (Derry/Londonderry)	4	3 (7)	7 (11)
South West (Portadown/Lurgan)	6	0	6
TOTAL	**40 (41)**	**13 (18)**	**53 (59)**

It is recognised that there are other physical barriers in Northern Ireland which the Department of Justice does not have responsibility for but which may be relevant to the issue of progress towards a shared future, for instance the Northern Ireland Housing Executive has responsibility for circa 20 interface structures.

[redacted]

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Strategic Context

Building shared communities is one of the pillars of the Department's Community Safety Strategy 2012-2017. The Strategy seeks to contribute to the creation of a safe, secure and shared future by addressing issues of prejudice and division and by working to support the efforts of many in society to overcome the physical and psychological barriers which exist in some communities.

In improving safety in interface areas and promoting community safety, the aim is to help to contribute to progress on issues like economic development, housing, shared space and employment growth.

It is clear that there are particular challenges in interface areas which in many cases have been disproportionately affected by the legacy of conflict. There has been considerable investment over the years aimed at improving delivery of services and the physical environment in interface areas, where some of the most acute divisions in our society are found. Our approach has been to build on that work.

We recognised through our work on the Programme for Government that solutions to the most deep rooted problems facing our community could not be delivered by any one Government Department or, indeed, by Government alone. We also acknowledged that change would require a process of careful engagement with communities over time.

Collaboration and partnership has been necessary at a number of levels including:

- Government;
- service delivery partners in the statutory and private sectors;
- community and voluntary groups; and

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- importantly, whether through the community and voluntary groups or otherwise, with local communities who need to play a leading role in identifying and defining priorities and needs and contributing to decisions about how those can be most effectively met.

The issue of funding to support change remains a significant factor, but especially in the current economic climate. Many of these areas face multiple difficulties resulting from high levels of social deprivation and economic disadvantage. These social factors can often lie behind problems of criminality and anti-social behaviour, or the fear of them, and so the issues cannot be addressed in isolation. The Department has been working with others including Belfast City Council and the International Fund for Ireland, as well as looking at the use of Government resources within other departments, to seek to identify ways in which change can be progressed using the funding that is available to best effect.

The priority in the Programme for Government concerning building a strong and shared community includes a commitment to "actively seek local agreement to reduce the number of 'peace walls'". The legacy of division and segregation is still obvious. While the interface structures are a symptom of the division in society and not the cause, a number of communities continue to see the need for physical barriers such as walls/fences or gates at an interface to ensure separation from 'the other side'. For them, the barriers give a sense of security and so are welcome and perceived as necessary.

While recognising the concerns, there is an increasing appetite for change. That desire needs to be nurtured. Government and other agencies need to create the environment for, and facilitate, positive change. We are committed to facilitating alternative mechanisms which can enable safety for communities by supporting a transition from the view that safety is achieved through separation.

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Our work to date has focussed on an approach where crime and fear of crime is "designed out" or reduced. That might be by the approach of additional police resources for an area, or the provision of better street lighting, combined with CCTV, or redesigning physical structures etc. Our aim is to create spaces that are for the community as a whole and which the community feel safe using or passing through.

Our approach under the Programme for Government commitment is based on the following principles:

- The perceptions of safety and security of the people living near to interfaces and interface barriers must be addressed;
- We will aspire to the removal of all interface barriers over time;
- The process of removing interface barriers will be undertaken on the basis of sustainable regeneration as part of a process towards building shared cities and towns;
- As Minister of Justice I made it clear at the outset that I did not intend new security barriers or structures that serve to segregate communities to be built; rather priority must be given to other forms of investment in people and places that will provide appropriate levels of safety and security;
- Change is most likely to progress where it comes from within communities, but communities should be facilitated to see the benefit of such change;
- Government and its agencies should seek to facilitate change and, where possible, encourage it; and
- Greatest value should be obtained from the limited resources, and effort should be made to identify sources of funding.

Taking these principles we looked at two main stages in developing a framework for change. This framework sought to build on existing structures:

- First, at a Governmental level, to ensure that there is an appropriate level of support and engagement within relevant Government Departments, within key

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statutory agencies, and in the Police and other agencies responsible for safety and security; and

- Second, developing local approaches based on the need for inclusivity, involving community representatives and local residents, and recognising the need to take account of the local context. In other words, one size did not fit all. The approach to individual interfaces needed to be flexible.

The Department of Justice's experience from its work in interface areas to date is that collaborative working between Government Departments and statutory bodies undoubtedly assists in dealing with the issues more effectively. I agreed to create a standing Inter-agency Group, as signalled in the Programme for Government, so that we could respond to any request for the transformation of an interface structure coming from engagement with the community. The Group would also generate schemes for particular locations and then suggest these to communities to show what would be possible.

I recognise that the segregation in our society cannot be tackled through addressing community safety concerns alone. The issues that have perpetuated division are complex and inter-connected; and community confidence can only be built when community safety, community relations and community development issues are considered and addressed in a co-ordinated way. Shared space and wider investment in employment and services accessible to all are key parts in reducing the impact and number of interfaces over time.

The creation of the Inter-agency Group has led to a more strategic approach to how interventions are designed and resources are allocated. This Group, in dealing with issues concerning safety and security at interfaces, seeks to work with communities and to build community confidence. The progress made to date has created some momentum for progress which we want to build on. It works alongside the existing structures such as the Community Relations Council led Interface Community

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Partners Group and The International Fund for Ireland Peace Walls programme and aids their work in developing and nurturing requests for community initiated change.

Building a United Community Strategy

The most challenging commitment under this strategy is the complete removal of all peace walls by 2023. From the work we have engaged in under the Programme for Government and from wider studies on the regeneration of interface areas we recognise that:

- Residents are concerned about change because of concern about safety;
- Residents must be at the heart of decision-making about interface areas (although there are challenges in engaging/identifying residents);
- The regeneration of interface areas is at the core of addressing the problems experienced by residents;
- Residents have identified their priorities and should be listened to, but expectations in terms of what is possible and when also have to be managed;
- The focus on walls/barriers in isolation from other issues is unlikely to be successful in many areas;
- The walls/barriers were a symptom rather than a cause of division but now reinforce division/suspicion; and
- Public policies (including planning, education, health, and housing) need to give a firmer commitment to support and prioritise the regeneration and sustainable development of interface areas. (We need to keep in mind the developments in the organisation and responsibilities of councils).
- We need to utilise, for instance, the work of Neighbourhood Renewal Programmes which already exist in many of these areas, including the availability of data covering a wide range of indicators and the specialist skills

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and knowledge within the statutory agencies to support the community in selecting appropriate interventions.

The weaknesses we have identified in respect of the current approach are:

- The lack of a dedicated programme budget has led to difficulty in securing cross departmental funding as priorities identified within the programme often do not align with existing Departmental plans;
- Our focus therefore has been primarily on creating more attractive and safe environments through a range of physical renewal measures aimed at improving safety and security without the need for physical walls and barriers. Without a cross Executive commitment we have had limited opportunity to address economic, social, and community renewal as part of a holistic plan. That will be necessary for the more difficult areas.
- The IFI Peace Walls Programme has been advantageous in facilitating the close engagement between statutory agencies and local communities. However, there remain interface structures where engagement has yet to take place, such as Portadown/ Lurgan, East Belfast and parts of West Belfast where community relations, to a greater or lesser extent, are particularly fragile. There remains a need for continued, intensive good relations work in these and other areas to bring them to a point where they can engage in discussion on the removal of interface structures.

Taking these points into consideration, we believe that the United Communities strategy, having gained cross Executive support, should provide an opportunity to address the weaknesses in the overall programme and to create an innovative approach. However, at this time, without the ability to address these weaknesses and set the target within a wider framework of improving safety and supporting regeneration, combined with the resources necessary to deliver it, and consistent and sustained political leadership at all levels, there is a substantial risk of failure.

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I trust this information is helpful. I have copied this correspondence to the Chair of the Committee for Justice.

DAVID FORD MLA
Minister of Justice

Derry City Council

Derry City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire
Derry Cittie Cooncil

6th October 2014

RE: **Inquiry into Building a United Community**

Dear Mike Nesbitt MLA,

Derry City Council Community Relations team would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community. Please find our response enclosed.

The response concentrates on the functioning and funding of the 'District Council's Good Relations Programme' specifically. The Good Relations Working Group of Derry City Council (A formal sub-group of council comprising of 1 elected councillor from each of our political parties – UUP, DUP, SDLP, SF) have authorised us to make this response. The response does not discuss wider policy issues or broader content of TBAUC as that is the role specifically of our elected political parties rather than necessarily the officers working to deliver Derry City Council's Good Relations Strategy.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the Community Relations Team via sue.divin@derrycity.gov.uk tel: 71365151 ext 8218.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Divin, Carol Stewart, Angela Askin.
Community Relations Officers

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TBAUC Inquiry

Submission of Evidence from Derry City Council Community Relations Team

October 2014.

Derry City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Dhoire
Derry Cittie Cooncil

Submitted to: **committee.ofmdfm@niassembly.gov.uk**

Committee for OFMDFM, Room 285, Parliament Buildings, Belfast, BT4 3XX.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Value of opportunity to submit evidence

Derry City Council Community Relations team would like to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community. The 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy has a key impact on Derry City Council's Good Relations service delivery and we value the opportunity to submit evidence to the inquiry into it.

1.2 Context of Derry City Councils CR Team submission

This response is submitted by the Community Relations Team in Derry City Council. This team comprises of 3 Community Relations Officers, 2 placement students and one Part-Time administrator – all of whom work in the field of the promotion of Good Relations and collectively have around 30 years experience in delivery of Good Relations by and through local government in the Derry~Londonderry area. The Good Relations Working Group of Derry City Council (A formal sub-group of council comprising of 1 elected councillor from each of our elected political parties – UUP, DUP, SDLP, SF) have authorised us to make this response and are aware of its content.

1.3 Focus of the response on District Council's Good Relations Programme

The response concentrates on the functioning, funding and content of the 'District Council's Good Relations Programme' which is specifically referenced in the 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy (p.107 paragraphs 6.32 – 6.38). The response does not discuss wider policy issues or broader content of TBAUC as that is the role specifically of our elected political parties rather than necessarily the officers working to deliver Derry City Council's Good Relations Strategy. It is hoped that the response will highlight the breadth and quality of the work currently funded under the District Council's Good Relations Strategy and give constructive feedback on the practical management of the District Council's Good Relations Programme within OFMDFM.

2.0 Main issues and relevance to terms of reference.

2.1 Specific relation to terms of reference

This response relates to the issues as identified in Terms of Reference: 'Make Recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community' and 'Seek views on...[how] division can be addressed...'

2.2 The District Councils Good Relations Programme

The District Council's Good Relations Programme has existed since before the Good Friday Agreement and has developed significantly over this time. All 26 District Councils currently participate. Through it OFMDFM asks District Councils to bid for funding annually based on their 'Good Relations Internal and External Audits and Action Plans'. Many councils term this their 'Good Relations Strategy'. OFMDFM then assess the applications and issue letter of offer for whatever amount they see fit. 75% of the total offered is funded through OFMDFM with councils providing 25% match funding. Claims are made quarterly by councils and reimbursed. Councils also must provide an annual report to OFMDFM outlining their spend and the actions delivered/outcomes achieved. The committee may find it useful to examine the annual reports submitted by councils to have a full picture of the work under the District Council's Good Relations Programme. Headings in councils Action Plans mirror the TBAUC aims.

2.3 Importance of the District Council's Good Relations Programme

Derry City Council has participated in this programme since its inception and recognises that it provides an important and valuable funding stream for the promotion of Good Relations work locally. Without the District Council's Good Relations Programme much of the work done by councils would be severely reduced due to lack of funding. The type, quality, range and scale of the work done by participating councils under the scheme varies significantly from council to council. Many researchers, consultants and interested individuals sometimes make the assumption that District Councils simply give out 'Good Relations Grant Aid' under the scheme. In fact Grant Aid is only a very small part of the work done by Community Relations / Good Relations Officers in District Councils.

2.4 Diversity of Local Government Good Relations work.

Derry City Council encloses its own current Good Relations Strategy as evidence of the range of Good Relations work and professionalism of its service provision under the District Council's Good Relations scheme. Further information can also be found on www.derrycity.gov.uk/goodrelations Work done by Derry City Council under their Good Relations Strategy / DCGRP includes: Good Relations Core and Project Grant Aid to groups; provision of free Good Relations related training or training with a positive GR outcome to community groups/statutory agencies/staff; primary and secondary schools good relations, citizenship and anti-prejudice initiatives; interface diversionary and strategic work; Black and Minority Ethnic Strategic work; Ubuntu Global Festival; regular support to all types of community and other groups for the promotion of Good Relations; Community Relations Week; Local Democracy Week; GR intergenerational work; inclusion of GR in sports summer schemes; mainstreaming of Good Relations into council services such as Heritage and Museums, Environmental Health, City Engineers, Sports Development; Language and Local Awareness initiative for migrants/BME communities; publication of resources tackling prejudice and promoting diversity; Section 75 focused GR work; initiatives dealing with

the past; Single identity inclusion work (eg. Political ex-prisoners, loyal orders, AOH, Londonderry bands forum); work on shared space; Bonfires/Alternatives to bonfires initiatives; anti-Hate Crime work and general promotion of Good Relations work through the media.

2.5 Annual Lateness of Letters of Offer under DCGRP from OFMDFM

Whilst Derry City Council views the DCGRP as a positive initiative and welcomes its inclusion in TBAUC there are however some issue we wish to highlight. One of these is the annual extensive delay in the issue of Letters of Offer to District Councils. Councils usually receive a 4-6 week deadline for submission of applications once the commissioning letter has been received. Overwhelmingly this is the issue raised repeatedly over 10 years by local councils with OFMDFM and it has not improved. The following is a list of the dates that OFMDFM issued its Letters of Offer to District Councils for funding under the programme in recent years:

Financial Year	Date of Commissioning letter from OFMDFM asking councils to bid for funding	Date of Letter of Offer to Derry City Council	% of funding request allocated by OFMDFM to Derry City Council
2014/15	22nd January 2014	27th August 2014	82%*
2013/14	13th May 2014	18th October 2013	100%
2012/13	14th February 2012	21st September 2012	100%
2011/12	17th January 2011	29th July 2011	100%
2010/11	23rd February 2010	23rd September 2010	100%
2009/10	6th March 2009	8th July' 2010 (revised letter 11th August 2010)	100%
2008/09	Archived	4th July 2008	Archived
2007/08	Archived	21st May 2007	Archived
2007/07	Archived	21st June 2006	Archived

*18% cut imposed on programmes expenditure to all district councils to the best of our knowledge.

This response wishes to highlight to the committee is that District Councils are (and for at least the last 9 financial years of this scheme) expected by OFMDFM to work 'At Risk' on expenditure and Good Relations Delivery. Please note particularly the dates that Councils receive their letters of offer and the trend around the delay in the issue of these which is getting worse rather than better. For the last 7 years councils have received their letters of offer for that respective financial year after the 1st quarter of the financial year has already passed. For the last 3 financial years the letters of offer 5-7 months into the financial year.

2.6 Negative impact of lateness of Letters of Offer annually.

The negative impact of the routine lateness of Letters of Offer on service delivery through the District Council's Good Relations Programme from OFMDFM cannot be overestimated. As this is the key vehicle for TBAUC delivery by District Councils we would request that the committee investigate why OFMDFM cannot manage to issue letters of offer for the financial year on 1st April annually and why this issue is getting worse rather than improving. Some of the impacts on TBAUC delivery are as follows:

- Local Councils are being expected to work at unacceptable risk. The DCGRP is now deemed a 'high risk' funding programme in Derry City Council. This damages the reputation of OFMDFM funding for TBAUC delivery.
- Budget cuts imposed late into the financial year mean that councils can no longer prioritise or plan as strategically as they wish. Derry City Council had to cut several initiatives completely and curtail others due to budget cuts this financial year – even if further funds are found that councils can bid for as verbally stated by officers in OFMDFM it is too late in the year to restore these programmes. This damages the implementation of TBAUC.
- The annual issue of letters of offer make longer term strategic planning difficult. This damages the implementation of TBAUC.
- Many staff (primary Good Relations /Community Relations Officers and support staff) funded under the DCGRP are placed on short term temporary contracts due to the annual nature of the DCGRP funding scheme and also due to the lateness repeatedly of letters of offer and the financial risk the DCGRP poses to councils. This means there is a high turnover of staff in these posts and a repeated drain of expertise out of these job roles. This damages the implementation of TBAUC.
- Many councils have had to take the decision to not issue grant aid letters of offer to groups until the Letter of Offer is received. This damages all Good Relations work related to this but may from now on mean councils can no longer fund summer diversionary and key interface work or Community Relations Week events as all of these traditionally require funding to be in place in the 1st quarter of the financial year.
- Community Relations Week has for over 10 years been a key public focus of Community Relations Delivery delivered in April/May/June (date set by CRC). Council's may no longer be able to participate in this higher profile event across Northern Ireland if letters of offer are not issued in time as the financial risk may be too great in light of recent budget cuts.

2.7 Transparency in competitive or non-competitive nature of DCGRP

There is at least a partial lack of transparency about understanding whether the DCGRP is a competitive programme or not. When applications are submitted by councils they are scored. In some previous years anecdotally we have heard that the 'top 5' councils got 100% of what they bid for with other councils taking a cut of some description in what was bid for initially and then having the chance in the 3rd quarter to bid for additional funds if they wished. In 2014/15 financial year it would appear that all councils took an 18% cut in their programmes budget regardless of the quality of their bid – but we have no definite evidence on this.

2.8 Proportionality of application of budget cuts

It is unclear whether the current budget cuts at Stormont are impacting the DCGRP disproportionately. Anecdotally it has been understood that many other departments programmes and initiatives have not been cut to the level of 18% at this stage. If the implementation of TBAUC is valuable to Northern Ireland then funding cuts applied to it (and specifically the DCGRP) should, if necessary at all, be proportionate.

2.9 Implementation of existing evaluation of DCGRP

Derry City Council's Community Relations team would draw the attention of the committee to the already existing findings of an evaluation of the District Council's Good Relations Programme 2 years ago. The NISRA 2012 'Evaluation of the District Council's Good Relations Programme' was set up to:

"Assess the impact and effectiveness of the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) and make practical recommendations for the development of the programme."

(P.3 Executive summary of 2012 NISRA Report)

The 2012 Report made 29 recommendations. TBAUC specifically endorses these. We would ask why it has taken 2 years to endorse these and why scrutiny has not been applied to see what progress was made in the 2 interim years?

2.10 Existing recommendations of DCGRP evaluation

Some of the Recommendations specifically included:

1. 'Establish a working definition of Good Relations specific to the DCGRP' – to the best of our knowledge this has not been done.
2. 'Encourage the focus at Council level to provide funding to inclusive projects as opposed to single identity or projects with a weak link to Good Relations' – To the best of our knowledge the programme appears to have applied budget cuts regardless of quality for 2014/15.
3. 'A growing concentration and focus on hard issues following the release of the CSI Strategy, particularly among those council areas where significant progress has already been made on softer issues.'– To the best of our knowledge the programme appears to have applied budget cuts regardless of quality for 2014/15.
4. 'Review the scoring framework used to assess annual action plans submitted by Councils, to shift focus from spend to impact and account for previous activity/performance. – To the best of our knowledge the programme appears to have applied budget cuts regardless of quality for 2014/15.
5. Provide a higher level intervention in relation to 'selling' DCGRP to Council senior management and Councillors. – We would be keen to know if any progress has been made on this to date, in particular with the new Chief Executives for the new supercouncils and councillors for the new supercouncils.
6. Undertake a more transparent assessment of action plans with particular reference to relevance of individual activities to Programme objectives – To the best of our knowledge the programme appears to have applied budget cuts regardless of quality for 2014/15.
7. Investigate the feasibility of changing funding allocations to a longer cycle- This is still urgent and needed, especially in the climate of budget cuts and financial uncertainty.
8. Address the recurrent delay in the issue of LOOs - This is still urgent and critical, especially in the climate of budget cuts and financial uncertainty.
9. Hold in-year events to bring GROs from all Councils together – Budget cuts and current priorities from OFMDFM seem to indicate this has been reduced rather than even maintained at previous levels.

3.0 Recommendations:

1. **Letters of offer:** As an absolute priority OFMDFM must ensure Letters of Offer under the District Council's Good Relations Programme are issued on the 1st April annually so that negative impact on TBAUC implementation is avoided.
2. **Transparency/Competitiveness:**That the District Councils Good Relations Programme should be open and transparent in how competitive it is and that councils submitting the strongest bids and evidencing high quality of Good Relations work in line with TBAUC should be rewarded financially for their quality of service.
3. **Budget cuts:** That the District Council's Good Relations Programme should be valued for the quality of work it delivers and consequently treated proportionately in terms of any budget cuts rather than taking a higher level of budget cut than elsewhere.
4. **NISRA 2012 Evaluation:** That all recommendations made in the NISRA 2012 evaluation be implemented.
5. **Officers evidence:** That if the committee wish to be further informed by oral evidence on the District Council's Good Relations Programme that they invite a selection of willing Good Relations / Community Relations Officers from a number and range of councils to give evidence collectively.

4.0 Publication of information and further information.

Derry City Council Community Relations team are fully aware that this submission or extracts from it may be published and have no issue with this.

Derry City Council Community Relations team will be happy to provide further evidence or give oral evidence if requested by the committee.

Derry City Council Community Relations team will not be formally publishing their evidence but note that the information contained in this submission could be made public if requested under Freedom of Information.

5.0 Contacts for the Community Relations Team in Derry City Council:

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09/10/2014

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Inquiry into Building a United Community

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1. Introduction and context of submission

1.1 Early Years[1] is the largest voluntary organisation working with and for all young children 0-12 in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. It is a non-profit making organisation and in 2015 will celebrate 50 years of working to promote and develop high quality, evidence-informed early childhood services for young children, their families and communities. Our vision is that children are strong, competent and visible in their communities; physically and emotionally healthy; eager and able to learn and respectful of difference. We have currently over 1,000 members across the statutory, community, voluntary and independent sectors supporting the child care and early education needs of over 30,000 children on a daily basis.

1.2 Currently Early Years provides a range of information, training, and advice and support services for parents, early childhood care and education providers, management committees and boards, employers, local authorities, departments and agencies. Projects and activities relate to child focused community based health and education; tackling social and educational inequalities; working with young Traveller children and their families; community development and working with children, practitioners, management boards, parents and carers to respect the various forms of difference in our society.

1.3 These and other local and cross-border evidence-based services and projects offered by our organisation also have proved to be internationally applicable through our participation in a number of international partnerships and networks designed to 'export' and share knowledge and best practice concerning peace building, shared spaces and early childhood education and care.

1.4 Early Years welcomes this opportunity to submit written evidence. The organisation would also be willing to further participate in the process by giving oral evidence to the committee on anything contained in this submission.

1.5 Commentary on elements of the Terms of Reference set for the Inquiry relevant both to our remit as established above and our practice based experience is as follows.

2. Exploring perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations

2.1 It is vital that the approach to a shared future and united communities embraces an ecological framework approach beginning in the earliest years and continuing through primary and secondary education levels. In developing a positive sense of self and others it is essential to address issues of inclusion and exclusion from an early age. It is well documented in early childhood research that children as young as three years old are aware of difference and by age six can develop negative attitudes and behaviour towards others who are different[2]. Such work must be underpinned by a clear perspective on children's rights and universal services to promote accessibility and inclusion of all children towards the best outcomes.

[1] For more see http://www.early-years.org/
[2] Too Young to Notice? The Cultural and Political Awareness of 3-6 Year Olds in Northern Ireland Connolly, P., Smith, A. & Kelly, B. (2002)

2.2 Relevant approaches must then also embrace wider support networks involving parents, families and communities as well as schools and education providers. In this area opportunities must be provided for parents from diverse backgrounds to share their beliefs, concerns and positive learning experiences across socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and gender borders with other parents and agencies.

2.3 Engaging with parents and other adults is also vital in order to address the intergenerational transmission of prejudicial attitudes to young children. Engaging with parents, carers and practitioners courageously therefore allows for attitudes and behaviour to be explored, including addressing prejudices and stereotypes. It is vital that space is created that is both safe and challenging for exploring these issues.

3. Seeking views on how sectarianism and division can be addressed

3.1 Early Years has designed, developed and implemented a flagship programme focused on developing respect for diversity and inclusion in the early years which is informed by and includes all of the principles outlined in section two above.

3.2 This is highly innovative in that the approach addresses inclusion in all its aspects focusing on ability, race, cultural ethnic and religious identity through age appropriate programmes. The Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme has been externally evaluated[3] though a randomised controlled trial and found to have a positive effect on young children's attitude towards and respect for others who are different.

3.3 The MIFC Respecting Difference Programme is currently linked to relevant curricula for children aged from two to seven years and consideration is being given to further development of the programme covering the timeframe right through to the end of primary school.

3.4 Through shared parent workshops and in management committee/board of governors workshops, adults have the opportunity to share their own experiences including experiences which as children shaped their identities and attitudes. They also have opportunities in an informal way for discussion and sharing with others who have been raised with different perspectives and attitudes. In this way parents, teachers, pre-school staff, governors and management committee members are themselves engaging, reflecting and building their own understanding of others who are different.

3.5 Many elements associated with the MIFC Respecting Difference programme make clear links into not only the pre-school but also the Foundation Stage curriculum (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding) and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) by addressing such themes as self-awareness, similarities and differences, relationships and feelings and emotions.

3.6 The key strengths of MIFC Respecting Difference are that it places a strong emphasis on promoting socio-emotional development as the foundation upon which diversity work can be undertaken and it looks at diversity and inclusion in all its aspects focusing on ability, race, cultural ethnic and religious identity through age appropriate programmes. The programme looks first at sameness before addressing difference. This is done using persona dolls where a character is developed which incorporates different aspects of

[3] Evaluation of the Media Initiative for Children: http://www.early-years.org/coral/research.php

identity. The children see the points of similarity and subsequently the points of difference. The persona dolls are an ideal practical tool to encourage the development of empathy, to see a situation from another's perspective.

3.7 It is vital therefore that children's identity is validated in the school or pre-school setting. One of the innovative aspects of the MIFC is that it explicitly addresses issues of identity with young children rather than ignoring or attempting to neutralise identity. In this way the ethos and identity of individuals, families and communities are respected and validated while children also grow in awareness of the identity of others.

3.8 Practices that foster multiple identities need to avoid two pitfalls – colour-blindness and tokenism. Colour-blindness is the denial of differences, very often out of an honest concern to treat 'all children equally'. The message children get from this is to be silent about difference. Tokenism is an effort to be inclusive in a limited time-bound way such as acknowledging cultural difference but only on a particular day e.g. Chinese New Year. Such activities risk being both patronising and stigmatising, in that they overlook the complexities of children's personal histories and family cultures and ignore socio-economic and other differences.

3.9 An example of this reflection from evaluation was that parents from the Unionist tradition participating in the MIFC programme in the Derry/Londonderry area commented positively on the fact that the programme actively engaged in open, honest dialogue with aspects of their tradition, for example in portrayal of marching bands. They felt that this contrasted sharply with other programmes which attempted to neutralise identity: "Looking at this town, people from the British tradition do tell their children not to mention certain things because of the fear factor. I've even encountered this in integrated education where people are not encouraged to talk about things like the Orders, the parades, it's a no-go area."

3.10 We would further draw attention, concerning engagement and partnership working best practice with a shared focus to improve outcomes for children, to the Toybox Project[4] strategic partnership implemented by Early Years - the organisation for young children.

3.11 The Toybox Project is a rights-based outreach service development model which aims to significantly reduce social and education inequalities experienced by young Traveller children aged 0-4, maximise participation in available programmes and services and strengthen capacities, engagement and partnership working.

3.12 The Toybox project also was subject to an independent evaluation[5] which stated that in terms of service delivery, the project has been very successful in terms of engaging families and supporting the development of children through play. Furthermore the evaluation found that the project has been very successful at filling the gap, and being a catalyst, between families and statutory support services, health visitors, social workers and others in the statutory sector. We believe that this innovative project represents a successful outreach model for enhancing child development outcomes for disadvantaged groups. By using the above practical strategies, informed by a robust programme design, the principles of equality of opportunity and access to education are translated into inclusive practice in the classroom.

[4] http://www.early-years.org/toybox/
[5] 'Toybox: Early Years development through play for Traveller children'; http://www.early-years.org/toybox/toybox-evaluation.pdf

4. Focusing on the challenges at both rural and urban interface areas

4.1 Many communities in rural regions can encounter invisible community division lines with fewer opportunities for rural interfaces and have high levels of new immigrants in the area due to employment opportunities. A greater level of detail and focus is required in these respects to promote social inclusion, equality and respecting difference in the areas of gender, religion, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation.

4.2 Over recent years our organisation has been involved in a range of success initiatives and projects in this area.

4.3 One practical example of this has been delivery of the Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme through the Fermanagh Shared Education Programme, to schools in Co Fermanagh to provide a vital foundation for teachers, boards of governors, parents, children and local communities to successfully engage in the provision of shared education

4.4 Furthermore, the organisation has been involved in the implementation of a 'Faces and Spaces' project, funded by Atlantic Philanthropies/OFMDFM's Contested Spaces programme, in schools and early years settings in five contested/interface communities in Northern Ireland including urban interfaces in Belfast and Derry and rural contested spaces in Castlederg and Newtownstewart. Such work has given us a model in designing and implementing a robust evidence-based approach with pre-school, primary, youth, parents and the wider community.

4.5 The project was overseen by both a regional steering group and importantly by four local partnerships which ensured that the schools, playgroups and SureStart projects had ownership of the project and that a shared community development ethos underpinned the programme.

4.6 This approach enabled the development of a community of learning based upon shared beliefs and approaches to inclusion to be created around the needs of all children aged between two and seven in the area. The local partnerships met on a rotational basis in each other's premises to plan the development of the programme. In addition to implementing MIFC within their own settings, the schools and pre-school groups came together for shared implementation, for shared parent workshops and for shared management committee/board of governors workshops.

4.7 The shared implementation was very different from a basic contact approach to shared activity. Settings came together to plan purposeful activities that engaged with the programme themes around inclusion. Together, they had opportunities to participate and reflect on issues of identity, culture, race, ethnicity and ability communicated in an age appropriate way.

4.8 In further reflection of the significance of such issues in and for rural communities our organisation, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Rural Development Council and the Border Counties Childhood Network implemented a Rural Respecting Difference Programme[6] part-funded under the PEACE programme, based on the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme.

4.9 This project brings another dimension to the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme as it gives Early Years an opportunity to engage with harder to

[6] http://www.early-years.org/rural-rd/index.php

reach families in rural areas through an innovative approach to inclusion and diversity related work.

4.10 The Rural Respecting Difference Programme is aimed at rural-based primary schools and afterschool clubs in a number of geographic areas along the border in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland across counties Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Leitrim, Louth, Monaghan and Tyrone.

4.11 The Programme includes workshop based training delivered by Early Years Specialists; comprehensive curriculum resource packs containing persona puppets, cartoon/media messages, CD of songs and rhymes, age appropriate jigsaws and games; a Teacher/Leader Service Design Manual; ongoing on-site support from an Early Years Specialist to assist programme implementation; Support for Board of Governors or Management Committees in practical delivery of equality opportunities and anti-bullying policies and opportunities to participate in good relations workshops and develop tailored good relations plan for school or after school.

4.12 The Rural dimension of the MIFC Respecting Difference programme has recently been further enhanced with the addition of a new message, persona doll and associated resources addressing issues from a rural perspective.

4.13 The content for these was developed by a steering group consisting of representatives from the Rural Development Council, Early Years and the Border Counties Childhood Network alongside the GAA, Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, Southern Education & Library Board, South Tyrone Empowerment Programme and South Armagh SureStart.

5. The role of communities in policy and decision making

5.1 The considerable capacity building in the initial phases and on-going support elements of this work cannot be understated. The work of Early Years has always been underpinned by a strong community development, grass-roots mobilisation ethos focused on helping communities to assess the need for, develop and manage their own early years setting.[7]

5.2 Here we would advocate reference to many of the required principles and skill-sets as reflected in the work of a Community Development Team within our organisation which works directly with independent and voluntary organisations in the sector by building capacity and empowering local communities and services; providing start-up support and information and ongoing training, information, coaching and mentoring in governance, leadership and management to develop quality sustainable childcare services.

5.3 Early Years firmly endorses participative approaches whereby the active participation of relevant members and the children, families and communities and agencies they represent form an essential part of the development, evaluation and ongoing monitoring of progress on the implementation and delivery of any plans, policies or strategies. Early Years is in the process of implementing and establishing a robust focus on participatory evaluation pedagogy and practice.

5.4 Prior to the adoption of this approach, research on and evaluation of the work of Early Years had been carried out by external evaluators and in the main focused on quantitative research methodology. The evidence gathered has

[7] http://www.early-years.org/committee-mgt/

provided greater credibility and visibility for the work of Early Years locally and nationally. Building upon this culture of evaluation and research, Early Years now wish to develop a capacity for participatory evaluation within the organisation and sector so that Early Years staff become skilled in on-going evaluation and reflective practice and develop the ability to use this evidence to further improve practice and programmes.

5.5 The enhanced and more developed usage of more participatory approaches to evaluation will not only help us understand how our projects and programmes are improving outcomes for our youngest citizens but it will also enable us to assess our impact and embrace a more fuller and participative method of engaging with our members, customers and stakeholders in truly finding out from them the types of the information, support and materials they need and how best to provide that to them.

6. Supporting and enhancing the policy and decision-making process

6.1 The effective linkage and adequate commitment to resourcing of such key strategies as Delivering Social Change, Together: Building a United Community, the Programme for Government, the Racial Equality Strategy and other policies and strategies to tackle inequalities with specific attention paid to multiple identities, multiple discrimination and inequalities experienced is strongly encouraged. To these we would further add the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Child Poverty Strategy, the Traveller Child in Education Action Framework and, given not only the considerable developmental benefits for young children but also wider employment, economic and social opportunities and benefits[8], the Bright Start Child Care Strategy, presently under development.

7. Consideration of best practice both locally and internationally

7.1 Early Years continues to build upon a significant knowledge base derived from practical experience and evidence-based research relating to diversity and inclusion with our youngest citizens, their carers and families and the communities in which they live.

7.2 We feel that it is vital that practice is informed by impact based evaluations of previous initiatives and through international and local best practice and partnerships. We support the development of such measures and see this as vital in the growth of future social and economic developments.

7.3 Services and projects provided by our organisation also extend to the Republic of Ireland, through HighScope and other cross-border initiatives, and beyond through a number of international partnerships and projects designed to 'export' knowledge and best practice. Some recent examples of this include:

7.3.1 An *International Network on Peace Building* with Young Children[9] project leading the sharing of best practice across countries experiencing conflict and post-conflict situations through the use and development of internationally applicable programmatic tools and resources and ongoing implementation of a Masters Programme on Applied Peace and Conflict Studies with early years, in partnership

[8] See 'Contribution of the Voluntary, Community and Independent Early Years Sector in Northern Ireland' report; Early Years; 2011 http://www.early-years.org/policy/state-of-sector.php
[9] http://www.early-years.org/international/

with the International Conflict Research Institute (INCORE) at the University of Ulster;

7.3.2 Participation in the Network for the Quality in Early Childhood Education from 0-6 years (NetQ6) , which is a cooperative network with educative and training institutions in Europe. The project aims are to compare, analyze and face the socio challenges that arise in the growth of early childhood and compile the best practices in the field to find solutions for the new realities and special needs found in a range of education systems;

7.3.3 Contribution to the work of the *Partnership for Reconciliation through Early Childhood Education and Development in Europe (PRECEDE)*[10] which aims to support civil society influence over reconciliation process and cohesion through education in early years in the Balkan region and Europe. It will develop a sustainable Balkan Region Network of civil society organisations concerned with young children and promoting acceptance of others and respect for diversity; develop sustainable country level networks of civil society organisations promoting acceptance of others and respect for diversity through early childhood education (ECD) in the Western Balkan region countries; and will link country level networks and the PRECEDE Network of civil society organisations with the International Network for Young Children in Conflict and Post-conflict Countries;

7.3.4 Participation in the Determinants to Reduce health Inequity Via Early childhood, Realising fair employment and Social protection (DRIVERS) project funded by the 7th Framework Programme to promote health equity through policy and practice in early childhood development, employment & working conditions, and income & social protection;

7.3.5 Supporting the delivery of pre-school programmes within Serbia and Turkey;

7.3.6 Hosting annual Service Learning Trips in partnership with Wheelock College, Boston to allow students from the College undertaking disciplines in psychology and early childhood development a unique opportunity to experience the work that is currently underway in Northern Ireland and study exemplary peace building efforts in early childhood settings;

7.3.7 Hosting visits by Turkish delegates from the Ministry of Education and UNICEF to view models of good practice, visit settings and participate in round table debate; and

7.3.8 Advocating, along with other members of the Early Childhood Peace Consortium[11], UNICEF and the Global Movement for the Culture of Peace, for the next Millenium Development Goals and a new UN Resolution to include peace building through Early Childhood Development.

7.4 Such activity enables Early Years to both consolidate and extend its international relationships and to continue to work to develop practice materials, training, advocacy tools and strategies on reconciliation and peace building through early years programmes to the benefit of local and international service providers.

[10] http://www.tacso.org/doc/PRECEDE%20corrected.pdf
[11] http://childstudycenter.yale.edu/international/peace/ecpc/index.aspx

8. Expression of interest in the further submission of evidence

8.1 Early Years welcomes this opportunity to submit written evidence. The organisation would also be willing to further participate in the process by giving oral evidence to the committee on anything contained in this submission.

Equality Coalition

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
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9 October 2014

Submission to the Inquiry into Building a United Community (T:BUC)

The Equality Coalition is a network of over 80 trade unions and equality NGOs from across the nine 'section 75' categories and beyond and is co-convened by CAJ and UNISON. The Equality Coalition commissioned two expert briefing papers, written by Dr Robbie McVeigh, on key matters relating to the T:BUC legislation, and we enclose these papers by way of submission to the Committee's call for evidence.

The first paper **'Sectarianism in Northern Ireland: towards a definition in law'** was finalised in April 2014 after discussions with stakeholders and addresses this matter, including potential definitions, that could be used to define sectarianism within the T:BUC framework and in any legislation emerging from the strategy.

The second paper **'Good Relations in Northern Ireland: towards a definition in law'** was finalised in October 2014 after discussions with stakeholders in the context of the T:BUC strategy proposing an extended 'good relations' role for the Equality Commission and that there by a 'good relations' section in Equality Impact Assessments..

The Equality Coalition would be willing to provide oral evidence to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

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Sectarianism in Northern Ireland:

Towards a definition in law

Expert paper by Dr Robbie McVeigh

April 2014

Special thanks go to UNISON
for the financial support in
developing this paper



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Equality Coalition

Equality Coalition

Sectarianism in Northern Ireland:

Towards a definition in law[1]

1.1. Introduction

[1]. The term sectarianism is used widely both academically and journalistically to name and address two main subjects. *First*, divisions within major religions – for example tensions within Islam between Sunni and Shia are commonly designated 'sectarian'; and *second*, divisions between and within political groups, particularly but not exclusively on the Left. In both cases the term at least implies an intimacy to the divisions involved – these are divisions between people who know each other rather than people who do not know each other. The term sectarianism does not feature greatly in human rights discourse.

[2]. In Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland the term sectarianism is widely used to name and address divisions between Protestants and Catholics, mostly, but not exclusively, related to Irishness. In this sense it is used routinely to describe incidents and processes. The standard use of the report that, 'the police are describing the incident as sectarian' provides some illustration of this commonsense understanding across Northern Ireland. Despite its everyday application in this context, however, the term is rarely defined. Moreover, despite the ubiquity of the term, it is poorly conceptualised.

[3]. While sectarianism per se has not been defined in law in either Ireland or the UK, aspects of sectarian identity have been defined in both legislation and through jurisprudence across different jurisdictions of the UK. Arguably the whole conflict in the north of Ireland can be characterised as 'sectarian'. Thus when 'dealing with' fair employment or 'community relations' or 'peace' itself, the target has often been sectarianism, at least in part. Consequently concepts like 'community background', 'religious identity', 'perceived religious identity' and 'political opinion' all help to frame notions of sectarianism in law. More broadly different targets – like 'anti-Irish racism', 'institutional racism' and 'institutional religious intolerance', all overlap with sectarianism and provide the building blocks of a definition in law.

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[1] A draft of this paper was presented at an Equality Coalition seminar in Belfast in March 2014. The paper was informed and improved by the discussion at that seminar. The draft was also improved by comments from Daniel Holder of CAJ and Professor Bill Rolston. Remaining errors of fact or judgement remain my own.

1.2. Undertheorisation

[4]. In Northern Ireland – despite both ongoing political tensions and previous conflicts being characterised as 'sectarian' – sectarianism has been under-theorised or underconceptualised (McVeigh 1992). There is no corpus of research and analysis to compare with, say, the body of work that exists on racism in Britain. One response to this discussion of an earlier draft of this paper sums this up perfectly:

> I welcome the fact that consideration is being given to defining sectarianism. I believe that the continuing failure to define or name the "elephant in the room" (i.e. sectarianism) serves to perpetuate the divisions that characterise NI society and has the knock-on effect that sectarian crimes go unpunished thus tending to normalise a level of racism/sectarianism that many newcomers say they find disturbing. In addition, from a public health perspective, there is emerging evidence that living in a divided society may contribute to the extremely poor mental and emotional wellbeing experienced by many within Northern Ireland. I appreciate that defining sectarianism and identifying the particular elements that can be outlawed will be fraught with difficulty but strongly believe that this is timely and that many will recognise and support the spirit and values behind the definition – when it is achieved.

[5]. This recognition of the impact of undertheorisation of sectarianism in one key area of Northern Ireland life might be applied equally to almost any other. Sectarianism continues to be the 'elephant in the room' – characterised by difficulty of find *any* practice to address its pervasive consequences. Defining sectarianism is a key part of changing this reality. Generally this accords with the principle of legal certainty, whereby particular concepts which may carry sanctions are set out with sufficient clarity in law to provide a framework where both the state and individuals to regulate their conduct. But alongside this there is a specific need to find ways of framing sectarianism that allow it to be countered. Of course no act of defining is perfect – the very complexity of a phenomenon like sectarianism means that any definition begs refutation. But this has been equally true of other forms of oppression and discrimination. As participants in the roundtable discussion noted, it may have been clear to affected persons what sexual harassment was, until there was a definition in law it was difficult to get a framework to move beyond protestations of subjectivity and effectively counter the phenomena.

[6]. Moreover, despite the undertheorisation of sectarianism, there is an expanding theoretical and research literature that helps throw light on the human rights and equality implications of the term. There is a literature suggesting that sectarianism is – or is much the same as – racism (Jarman 2012; McVeigh and Rolston 2007) and another literature that says it is

different from racism (Brewer and Higgins 1998). (Even without engaging with the text, titles like 'Race Relations in the Six Counties' (Moore 1972) or 'Holy War in Belfast' (Boyd 1969) give some sense of this disparity.) There is also a literature directly comparing the two phenomena (Brewer 1992; McVeigh 1998; McVeigh and Rolston 2007). Insofar as any substantive *difference* between racism and sectarianism is spelt out, the analysis is usually that the conflict in Ireland is predominantly religious – as the formally religious appellations 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' would suggest. For example, Bruce suggests:

> The Northern Ireland conflict is a religious conflict. Economic and social considerations are also crucial, but it was the fact that the competing populations in Ireland adhered and still adhere to competing religious traditions which has given the conflict its enduring and intractable quality. (1986: 249)

[7]. In this analysis it is argued that what sectarianism involves *is* theological dispute – a contemporary rehearsing of the explicitly theological differences within Christianity that characterised the Reformation, not only in Ireland, of course, but across Europe and beyond.

[8]. But this analysis only covers part of the story; there is a plethora of other evidence illustrating the more ethnic dimension to conflict in Ireland. The English/Irish and Settler/Native dynamic predates the Reformation and *ipso facto* looks more like 'race' than 'religion' – using the notion of descent we find both actual and perceived connections between present day 'Protestants' and 'Catholics' and historical, pre-reformation differences (McVeigh 2008). Moreover other labels – like 'Unionist' and 'Loyalist' or 'Nationalist' and 'Republican' – signify the political and ethnic elements which also constitute identities that appear formally theological.[2] Once the additional 'economic and social considerations' are added to the mix it becomes increasingly difficult to disentangle these different elements. This already suggests that we are dealing with *ethnicity* – which recognises just such an amalgam of different elements – rather than faith. Tellingly in the jurisprudence of 'fair employment', 'perceived religious identity' came to be more important than 'religious identity'. The ethnicity paradigm offers a holistic reading of inequality and discrimination in Northern Ireland that the 'religious conflict' approach cannot.

[2] Furthermore, following the retirement of Ian Paisley, there is a dearth of 'political religious' figures in Northern Ireland. There is nothing akin to 'political Islam' among either major political tradition; indeed, politics in Northern Ireland appears generally more secular than, say, in the USA.

[9]. Moreover, over the last thirty years there has been a further tangible 'convergence' of these different elements – religion, political identity, institutional religious intolerance as well as race - across the different jurisdictions within the UK which make it even more difficult to isolate those elements that might make something a discrete 'religious conflict'. Thus the rise in and focus on Islamophobia and 'institutional religious intolerance' suggest lines of demarcation are already more blurred generally; recognition of anti-Irish racism, particularly in England and Scotland, the focus on the overlap between anti-Irish racism and anti-Catholicism in sectarianism in Scotland, the blurring of distinctions between racism and sectarianism within 'good relations' practice in Northern Ireland: all suggest definitively that what we are dealing with should be regarded as ethnicity – a concept which is embedded with all these complexities – rather than some abstract, discrete issue of 'faith'. Even if we stick to the crudest and most brutal manifestations of sectarianism in Northern Ireland, the widespread genocidal imperative, we find identities that look more like ethnicity than faith: 'Kill all Irish'; 'Kill all Taigs'; 'Kill all Huns'.

[10]. Despite this, some actors continue to resist the analysis of sectarianism in terms of ethnicity – not necessarily because it is 'really about' religion but rather because it is so exceptional that it can't be contained within any existing paradigm of analysis. This approach regards sectarianism as a phenomenon *sui generis* – so exceptional that this precludes inclusion in any broader equality analysis or agenda. The repudiation of ethnicity is particularly significant in terms of its implications for human rights discourse. If sectarianism is regarded as purely 'religious' then the appropriate mechanisms are weaker. The 'exceptionalism' approach largely pre-empts any protections at all. Not surprisingly, this kind of exceptionalism is usually adopted by those who want to exclude such issues from international protection – witness the Indian government approach to Dalits or the Irish government on Travellers. It involves the dangerous strategy of 'ethnicity denial' (McVeigh 2009). Crucially, the British Government has not taken this position on sectarianism.

[11]. It has also sometimes been argued that sectarianism should not be recognised as a form of racism in Northern Ireland for tactical reasons (McVeigh 1998). This is the notion that it is better not to recognise sectarianism as racism because it might 'confuse' intervention against other forms of racism. This is not without logic in a context in which BME communities are often placed in a vulnerable relationship with regard to larger Protestant and Catholic communities. This strategic argument is weak, however, in terms of human rights discourse.

[12]. Moreover, if it ever were the case that general anti-racism in Northern Ireland was served by the exclusion of sectarianism 'from the mix', this hardly now obtains. First, Northern Ireland achieved the 'race hate capital of Europe' tag despite this exclusion – so it has not worked very well as an anti-racism strategy. Recent allegations by the PSNI about the involvement of Loyalist paramilitaries in 'ethnic cleansing' continue to signal the intimacy of the connections between racist and sectarian violence (BBC News 2014). Second, the exceptionalism of sectarianism from race discourse has not seen the post-Macpherson advances implemented in Northern Ireland even in terms of BME communities (NICEM 2013). Finally, as already mentioned, the post-Good Friday Agreement state has very consciously integrated analysis and intervention on racism and sectarianism with respect to concepts such as 'good relations'. This has had a negative impact on anti-racism in Northern Ireland because it disconnects it from both best practice in other parts of the UK as well as international standards. Thus, while it may help to address sectarianism through wider analyses of racism, this can never be justified to 'dilute' the analysis of racism through its association with sectarianism. One obvious example of this can be found in the use of the term 'equity' instead of 'equality'. The importation of a *sui generis* term from the exceptionalist approach to sectarianism is profoundly problematic – anti-racism has always been centrally about equality not equity. In other words, the synthesis of racism and sectarianism within the 'good relations' paradigm has encouraged a 'lowest common denominator approach' and moved anti-racism as well as anti-sectarianism away from a focus on international standards and human rights compliant approaches.[3]

[13]. In short, the case for exceptionalism is poor and poorly made – it rarely moves beyond statements on the complexity of sectarianism, defined by its indefinability. Furthermore, no one has suggested that the conflict in Northern Ireland is *solely* a religious conflict. Like most conflicts it involves a complex mix of different elements including religion. So the issue is already nuanced – when people seek to force this issue they are really saying the conflict is *primarily* a religious conflict or primarily an ethnic conflict. From a human rights point of view this debate doesn't really matter. Providing that it is accepted that the conflict has an element of ethnicity then that 'bit' of the complex is deserving of protection by international mechanisms that address ethnicity and racism. (And by extension those 'bits' that are purely religious

[3] It bears emphasis that the notion of 'good relations' shares a similar lack of definition with even less grounding in international law, despite recent attempts in the UK to improve the robustness of the term (Johnson and Tatam 2009; Wigfield and Turner 2010). Given this lack of clarity, the statutory good relations duty on public bodies in GB definition in s149 of the Equality Act 2010 is the most useful as well as the closest to being definitive: *good relations …involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—(a)tackle prejudice, and (b)promote understanding.*

should be protected by mechanisms that address religion like the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance.)

[14]. It is also increasingly difficult to justify the need to separate different forms of inequality given the growing recognition of *intersectionality*. Intersectionality - sometimes 'intersectionalism' - is the analysis of the way forms of oppression and discrimination support and reinforce each other. This paradigm recognises that different inequalities compound each other in specific ways and insists that focussing on single issue discriminations often misses the reality of inequality for those who are most unequal and discriminated against. (Crenshaw 1989). The significance of intersectionality has been increasingly recognised in international human rights discourse (Thornberry 2008, 2013). In other words there is a general tendency towards accepting the overlap between racism and issues like religion, ethnicity and gender.

[15]. Before turning to the lessons of international mechanisms, however, it is useful to look at how sectarianism – and more widely, race and religion – is named and addressed across the different jurisdictions and equality regimes in the UK. As has been suggested, there has been a degree of convergence in all of these. But it is also possible to trace contradictions and disjunctions which illustrate precisely why international standards are necessary in supporting best practice in human rights and equality mechanisms.

1.3.Northern Ireland

[16]. The emergence of the state of Northern Ireland followed the partition of Ireland in 1920 on explicitly sectarian grounds – the state boundary was designed to secure a 'working' Protestant majority. Whether regarded positively as, 'a Protestant Parliament' and a 'Protestant State' or negatively as an 'Orange State', overt sectarian discrimination was embedded in the polity from the start. Much of the reformism of the last 50 years has been a movement away from that formal, explicit state endorsement of sectarian discrimination. To a large extent the periods of constitutional change since have been movements away from that specific form of institutional sectarianism.[4]

[4] This Northern Ireland state also repudiated any need for anti-racist legislation – mostly because of the dangers of 'readacross' to sectarian discrimination. The issue of the extension of the legislation to Northern Ireland was raised specifically during discussions leading up to the first Race Relations Act in 1965. The British Home Secretary was asked if the views of the Northern Ireland Government had been sought on the matter. The response of Frank Soskice was that, '[t]heir views have been sought, and they do not wish the Bill to apply to Northern Ireland'.

[17]. Both Direct Rule (1972-97) and the post-GFA state have been reformist in this way. Despite the absence of agreed definitions outlined above, there has therefore been a fair amount of intervention against some of the key indicators and consequences of sectarianism in Northern Ireland in the context of both Direct Rule and the post-GFA state. While much of this activity was couched in terms other than 'sectarianism' or 'anti-sectarianism', the reformist project has had dealing with the legacies of sectarian inequality at its core.

Anti-Discrimination - Fair Employment and Section 75

[18]. This kind of legislative reform began with incitement to hatred legislation in 1971 which was followed by a raft of administrative reforms under Direct Rule. Legislatively it was dominated by the Fair Employment Act 1976. The 1976 Act expressly addressed direct discrimination in employment issues. This was extended to indirect discrimination by the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1989 and to goods and services by The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. It was extended to include an equality duty through Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998). This section imposed quality proofing across a range of equality issues as well as imposing a subordinate duty to promote good relations. The 1998 Order was amended by the Fair Employment and Treatment Order (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 in December 2003 to meet the requirements of the EU Framework Directive for Equal Treatment in Employment and Occupation. But the 1976 Act continued to define categories. (Thus '"political opinion" and "religious belief" shall be construed in accordance with section 57 (2) and (3) of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976').

[19]. While this legislation was clearly designed to manage discrimination connected to sectarianism, it carried a wide range of targets and even further implications. It expressly protected people from religious and political discrimination. Through case law the scope of the Act extended to cover acts of political discrimination that had very little connection to the conflict in the north of Ireland.[5] In terms of religious discrimination, it covered acts that were clearly connected to discrimination that was immediately connected to notions of sectarianism. But it also extended to cases that were unconnected to conflict – like, for example, Christians being required to work on a Sunday. Finally, it extended to non-Christian religious groups that were in no way

[5] It is striking that case law on Fair Employment also opened it up to the broader, explicitly political, discrimination. Here the term is being used much more akin to the Left/Right political sectarianism indicated above. This kind of formally 'political discrimination' would be outwith most international protections from *ethnic* discrimination.

connected to Protestant/Catholic conflict, however defined. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland provides a useful overview:

> The FETO outlines situations where individuals may complain that they have been discriminated against on grounds of religious belief and/or political opinion. It may be that individuals believe that they are treated less favourably than others because they are Catholic or Protestant or because they are perceived to hold either of these religious beliefs; or because they are perceived to be nationalist or unionist; or indeed individuals may be discriminated against because they do not hold any of these beliefs or opinions. Political opinion is not limited solely to Northern Ireland constitutional politics and may include political opinions relating to the conduct or government of the state, or matters of policy, eg, conservative or socialist political opinions. A political opinion which includes approval or acceptance of the use of violence for political purposes in Northern Ireland is excluded. Religious belief includes those of other religions, eg, Judaism, Islam and Eastern Orthodox Christianity, as well as other faiths and philosophies such as Hinduism, Buddhism and philosophical theism, to name a few. (2012: 3-4)

[20]. In the operation of the legislation, however, ethnicity clearly played a more significant role than either of the two manifest characteristics of the act – there were far more 'ethnic' cases than either religious or political. It is perhaps useful to think of this reality in terms of a simple Venn diagram – the interlocking circles were named by the categories 'religious belief' and 'political opinion' but most cases involved the intersection which was much more akin to notions of ethnicity. In other words, neither the politics nor the faith of most victims was as important as their 'perceived religion'. It was the ethnic categorisation of the victim as 'Catholic' or 'Protestant' rather than their politics or religious beliefs that caused them to be discriminated against. In Northern Ireland for example there was an obvious similarity with the operation of the Race Relations Act in Britain. Where religious categories overlapped with ethnic ones – as in the case of 'Jew', there was no issue that the category should be afforded the protection of the legislation. Even though 'Jew' is a formally religious label, the instruction 'no Jews need apply' was outlawed. In the majority of fair employment cases, the categories 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' were being used in precisely this ethnic sense.

Community Relations/Good Relations

[21]. A related but distinct paradigm also developed in the development of a community relations paradigm for addressing sectarian division in Northern Ireland. While this drew directly on US and UK community relations approaches to managing racism, it was resistant to identifying sectarianism as a racism. It played little part in the efforts to extend some form of British anti-racism relationship to Northern Ireland. This all changed, however, in the wake of the GFA.

[22]. When the Community Relations Council launched its *A Good Relations Framework: An Approach to the development of Good Relations* in 2006, 'dealing with' racism had been unambiguously integrated into the community relations/ good relations paradigm:

> Those who have worked on anti-racism and anti-sectarianism approaches in Northern Ireland have acquired decades of experience. The promotion of good relations requires that both these areas of expertise be joined together to provide an approach that will enable racism and sectarianism *to be addressed equally and together*. (2004: 5, emphasis added)

[23]. When the state's 'Good Relations' strategy emerged in the OFMDFM (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) *A Shared Future* document in 2005 (2005b), the synthesis was complete.[6] The blueprint for the 'Good Relations' response to racism and sectarianism was in place. This has largely continued. This 'convergence' is important since it further undermines the case for the exceptionalism of sectarianism – since the things are being addressed equally and together, it further begs the question of whether there is any substantive difference at all.

[24]. As we will see, developments in England and Wales and Scotland also continued to support convergence. The recognition of both 'anti-Irish racism' and 'institutional religious intolerance' alongside a broader acceptance of the rising importance of addressing Islamophobia encouraged a British version of what the international community had recognised as 'intersectionality'.

[25]. However, the continued failure to 'go the final step' and identify sectarianism as a form of racism carries with it many contradictions. For example, the PSNI, suggests in its 'hate crimes' definitions:

[6] Although technically this emerged in a period of Direct Rule during a period of suspension of the devolved post-GFA institutions.

> The term 'sectarian', whilst not clearly defined, is a term almost exclusively used in Northern Ireland to describe incidents of bigoted dislike or hatred of members of a different religious or political group. It is broadly accepted that within the Northern Ireland context an individual or group must be perceived to be Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, or Loyalist or Republican. [7]

This approach leads to *three* separate categories of hate crime – 'racist', 'sectarian' and 'religious'. These are thus recorded in the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) Report:

> In Northern Ireland, 990 incidents and 771 crimes with a racist motivation were recorded in 2008/09; 46 incidents and 35 crimes with a faith/religion motivation were recorded in the same period, and 1595 incidents and 1017 crimes with a sectarian motivation were recorded. While the figures for crimes with a faith/religion motivation showed a decrease on the previous year, crimes with racist motivations increased. Amongst the crimes recorded, around 40% of crimes with a racist or sectarian motivation were violent crimes, as were 17.1% of crimes with a faith/religion motivation.[8]

[26]. So in this definition of sectarianism the phenomenon is disconnected from both 'race' and 'faith/religion', whatever sectarianism is about, it isn't about either racism or religion. This is the clearest manifestation of the exceptionalist approach.

[27]. In contrast new interventions like the 'Together' document[9] appear to collapse the difference between racism and sectarianism in Northern Ireland almost completely (OFMDFM 2014). Here the new paradigm of 'good relations' is used to integrate racism and sectarianism and separate them from other rights and equalities constituencies and issues. They become 'twin blights' to be addressed together and, just as importantly, largely separately from other forms of discrimination or hate. Either way, it becomes increasingly difficult to ignore the profound overlap between 'religion' and race in much of this approach.

[28]. There are also specific reasons for looking at England and Wales and Scotland alongside the broad point that they are part of UK state reporting and implementation responsibilities. First there are issues in terms of good and bad practice – the Macpherson report and its outworkings remains a high

[7] PSNI Annual Statistical Report: Report No. 3, Hate Incidents and Crimes, 1st April 2008 – 31st March 2009, pp4-5.
[8] ECRI Report on the United Kingdom (fourth monitoring cycle) CM(2010)10 add4, paragraph 126
[9] OFMDFM (May 2013) Together Building a United Community Strategy
http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community

water mark on racial justice. This episode was less connected to international standards than domestic politics and justice but there are crucial lessons to be learned from Macpherson as well as other lessons from the relatively progressive regime on race in England and Wales. Second, the issue of 'readacross' continues to impact anti-discrimination –it appears that sometimes reforms are not progressed because of the impact they might have on other political issues.[10] Finally, developments in England and Wales and Scotland illustrate important – and strikingly different – tendencies in the wider engagement with sectarianism. In England and Wales – post Macpherson there is a general tendency towards 'convergence' – a recognition of the overlap between the categories of 'religion' and 'race'; in Scotland a continuing struggle to make sense of the 'exceptionalism' of sectarianism as something that, however defined, isn't racism. Moreover, the currency in Britain of addressing 'institutional religious intolerance' in particular begs the question of what such an approach might bring to Northern Ireland. In this context, it is remarkable that the implications of the Mubarek Inquiry into the racist murder of a Muslim in custody do not seem to have informed policy in Northern Ireland at all. This kind of omission seems attributable – at least in part – to the ongoing desire to maintain racism and sectarianism as 'separated discourses'.

1.4. England and Wales

Race Relations Act 1976, Mandla v Lee and the Equality Act 2010

[29]. It bears emphasis that the 2010 Equality Act marked the formal convergence of race and religion (alongside other 'groups') in British anti-discrimination legislation. In other words, the festishing of the difference between racism and sectarianism in Northern Ireland appears very odd once the intersectionality embedded in contemporary approaches in the rest of the UK is recognised. This was already compounded by the outworking of Race Relations legislation, in particular the *Mandla v Lee* case which has become definitive in the jurisprudence of ethnicity:

> For a group to constitute an ethnic group in the sense of the 1976 Act, it must, in my opinion, regard itself, and be regarded by others, as a distinct community by virtue of certain characteristics. Some of these characteristics are essential; others are not essential but one or more

[10] Here the failure to introduce anti-racist legislation in Northern Ireland is a classic example – this appeared less consequent on the concern to continue to discriminate legally against BME people in NI than on concerns that this might impact on sectarian discrimination.

> of them will commonly be found and will help to distinguish the group from the surrounding community. The conditions which appear to me to be essential are these: (1) a long shared history, of which the group is conscious as distinguishing it from other groups, and the memory of which it keeps alive; (2) a cultural tradition of its own, including family and social customs and manners, *often but not necessarily associated with religious observance*. In addition to those two essential characteristics the following characteristics are, in my opinion, relevant: (3) either a common geographical origin, or descent from a small number of common ancestors; (4) a common language, not necessarily peculiar to the group; (5) a common literature peculiar to the group; (6) a common religion different from that of neighbouring groups or from the general community surrounding it; (7) being a minority or being an oppressed or a dominant group within a larger community, for example conquered people (say, the inhabitants of England shortly after the Norman conquest) and their conquerors might both be ethnic groups. ([1983] 1 All ER pp. 1066-7, emphasis added).

[30]. The case itself concerns an identity which is at least as explicitly 'religious' as 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' in Northern Ireland – discrimination against a Sikh child because of his use of a religious symbol. Moreover it goes on to identify religion as a key element within the indication of ethnicity. Thus in the definitive UK test case on ethnicity, religion and religious identity is already inextricably connected to race. The Race Relations Act 1976 provided the template for the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. Mandla v Lee was a key referent in discussions leading up to the Order and proved crucial in the naming of Travellers as a group protected by the Order.[11]

Criminal Justice Act 1991

[31]. Section 95 of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 has resulted in comprehensive ethnic monitoring across criminal justice system in England and Wales. This states that:

> The Secretary of State shall in each year publish such information as he considers expedient for the purpose of facilitating the performance of those engaged in the administration of justice to avoid discriminating

[11] Ironically, if the Mandla case were brought in Northern Ireland it seems likely that it would be taken as a fair employment case - given the centrality of Sikhism to the case. In other words, the case that was definitive of ethnicity in England and Wales would not be recognised as race discrimination in Northern Ireland. Integrating race and fair employment law would avoid some of these more bizarre contradictions.

against any persons on the ground of race or sex or any other improper ground.

[32]. The consequent data brings together statistical information on the representation of BME people as suspects, offenders and victims within the Criminal Justice System and as employees/practitioners within criminal justice agencies. This allows appropriate critical engagement with other non-statutory actors on race and criminal justice. It provides key baseline data in order to examine the three core questions on race and criminal justice concerning victimisation, criminalisation and employment.

Table A: Overview of Race and the Criminal Justice System: Proportion of individuals in the CJS by ethnic group compared to general population, England and Wales 2012

	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Chinese or Other	Unknown
Population aged 10 or	87.1%	3.1%	6.4%	1.7%	1.7%	-
Stop and Searches (s1)	67.1%	14.2%	10.3%	2.9%	1.3%	4.2%
Arrests	79.5%	8.3%	5.9%	3.0%	1.4%	1.8%
Cautions	83.9%	7.0%	5.2%	-	1.4%	2.6%
Court Proceedings (Indictable)	71.4%	7.8%	4.7%	1.9%	1.1%	13.1%
Convictions (indictable)	73.2%	7.5%	4.5%	1.8%	1.1%	11.9%
Sentenced to Immediate Custody (Indictable)	70.6%	8.9%	5.5%	1.9%	1.7%	11.4%

[33]. There is obviously a key question to what a similar overview might reveal in Northern Ireland – in terms of both BME and sectarian identities.[12] This would be important positive innovative addition to the state's contribution on racism and should be provided to meet existing international obligations on minimum standards.[13]

[12] Recent research in The Detail on sectarian disparities in the Prison Service offers one example of what this might look like. The key point is that this information should be provided upfront by the state as part of its equality duties – as it is in the CJS Race data - rather than extracted via Freedom of Information requests (McCracken 2014).

[13] For example, the Prison Review Team (2011) offers one example of what this might look like. But this kind of monitoring should be routine and should be made with regard to ethnicity as well as 'religion' or 'community background'.

Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and Macpherson Report

[34]. Macpherson defined 'racism' and 'institutional racism' thus:

> "Racism" in general terms consists of conduct or words or practices which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt form. "Institutional Racism" consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.
>
> It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. (MacPherson 1999: 6.4, 6.34).

[35]. Crucially Macpherson addressed the notion of institutional racism with specific reference to the criminal justice system. None of this analysis should suggest that Macpherson was 'perfect' – it diluted earlier definitions of 'institutional racism' and there are many more radical approaches to anti-racism. Recent revelations suggest that the inquiry was profoundly compromised by 'secret policing'. Moreover, it can hardly be claimed to have ended 'institutional racism' in the UK – or even the Metropolitan Police – over the past 15 years. Nevertheless, Macpherson represents a high watermark in UK state anti-racism and an important international model for both other states and other jurisdictions within the UK.

Mubarek Inquiry and Keith Report

[36]. Finally the discussion of sectarianism in Northern Ireland should also pay specific attention to the *Mubarek Inquiry*. This engaged with institutional racism in the British prison service in some detail. It also has wider implications in terms of the interface of race and religion and criminal justice – these are particularly important obviously in terms of Northern Ireland:

> The Inquiry's terms of reference did not, of course, permit it to investigate generally how Muslim prisoners are treated in prison. It is an important topic which should be properly investigated by professionals in the field. But the perception that Islamophobia is on the rise highlights the fact that the definition of institutional racism adopted by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry focused on discrimination and prejudice because of a person's colour, culture or ethnic origin. It did not refer to the person's religion. There is no reason why institutional prejudice should be limited to race, and thought should be given by the

> Home Office to recognising the concept of institutional religious intolerance. (Keith 2006: Volume 2: 617)

[37]. In consequence, Keith argues, 'Since the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry's definition of institutional racism was accepted by the Government, there is no reason why it should not be adapted to define institutional religious intolerance':

> The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their religion. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping which disadvantage people of a particular religion. (Keith 2006: Volume 1 546, 62.27)

[38]. Thus there is a general tendency towards 'convergence' or intersectionality in the context of England and Wales:

> The Ministry of Justice Head of Profession for Statistics is responsible for the content and timing of Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System, and takes very seriously the view of users of the publication. Police data on racially or religiously aggravated offences have been published in the report since 2002 and tables showing the figures for individual police force areas have been published since 2003. Due to the way in which police figures are recorded, it is not possible to separate offences that are racially aggravated from those that are religiously aggravated…. The religion and belief of defendants and victims has been collected by the Crown Prosecution Service since April 2007, and we are assessing data quality for inclusion in the next publication. The Ministry of Justice's chief statistician is responsible for the timing and content of statistical releases and will ensure that if the data are of sufficient quality it will be published.[14]

[39]. Thus while the British model fails to disaggregate racially and religiously-aggravated offences, the interest in recording and identifying both is not specific to Northern Ireland. Moreover, convergence between race and religion categories appears to be increasing.

[14] House of Lords, Written answers and statements, 22 October 2010 Hansard source (Citation: HL Deb, 22 October 2010, c205W)

1.5.Scotland

[40]. Scotland followed a slightly different path following the Macpherson Report. Although Scotland had a devolved criminal justice system and was not directly addressed by the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, there was a period of intense activity in Scotland in response to Macpherson (Scottish Executive 1999; Scottish Parliament 2000; Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Steering Group 2001.) It bears emphasis that this contrasts starkly with the absence of similar intervention in Northern Ireland (NICEM 2013).

[41]. More specifically there has also been recent intervention on sectarianism with much closer reference to Northern Ireland – addressing relations between Protestants and Catholics in Scotland with frequent reference to the politics and culture of Northern Ireland (Scottish Government 2013) (This follows similar work by Scottish NGOs like Nil By Mouth (2014). From the perspective of the *Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland*:

> Sectarianism in Scotland is related to, but distinct from, racism and other forms of religious bigotry such as anti-Semitism or Islamophobia. We do not make any judgement here that sectarianism is more or less serious than any other form of discrimination or hostility, but believe that it, too, should be acknowledged and acted against in a systematic way and on the basis of evidence. (2013: 13)[15]

[42]. The working definition of 'intra-Christian sectarianism' is:

> Sectarianism in Scotland is a complex of perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, actions and structures, at personal and communal levels, which originate in religious difference and can involve a negative mixing of religion with politics, sporting allegiance and national identifications. It arises from a distorted expression of identity and belonging.
>
> It is expressed in destructive patterns of relating which segregate, exclude, discriminate against or are violent towards a specified religious other, with significant personal and social consequences. (2013: 18)[16]

[15] However the Advisory Committee also insists, 'Anti-Irishness, in a cultural sense, is clearly a form of racism and should be named as such' (2013: 18).

[16] European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) – Final report on the United Kingdom adopted by ECRI at its 50th plenary meeting (15-18 December 2009), paragraph 126

[43]. The emphasis on religion in the Scottish definition appears odd. Especially since the definition appears to be at pains to insist that it is not about religion. In further 'Notes on the working definition':

> It is always difficult to compress complex concepts into short working definitions; the process risks losing nuance and, ultimately, intelligibility. Here we outline some reflections on the working definition to aid understanding…. Our definition does not presuppose that those who engage in sectarian behaviour are currently religious believers or have religious motivation; only that the original difference had a religious element. In some circumstances that element may now be lost, leaving, perhaps, only 'them' and 'us' opposition. (2013: 18)

[44]. This ambiguity appears bizarre since what is often regarded as the paradigmatic example of Scottish sectarianism – the 1923 Church of Scotland publication *The Menace of the Irish Race to our Scottish Nationality* – makes the race and nationality element explicit. This is a religious institution, making a broadly religious intervention but its concern is unambiguously about 'race'. It is important obviously to continue to learn from the Scottish process but it might be suggested that some of the limitations of the definition follow from not situating the work in terms of international standards. More positively the response of the Scottish Government to Macpherson provides an example of how a devolved administration might respond more proactively to the notion of 'institutional racism'.

1.6. UN and Council of Europe

[45]. In short, recent developments within the different jurisdictions of the UK suggest a broad convergence of race and religion based discriminations but they also, less helpfully, continue to confuse different elements. Fortunately recent work in Northern Ireland has seen sectarianism increasingly rooted in international standards. In fact, to some extent the broader ongoing discussion around the nature of sectarianism is a moot point with regard to human rights discourse since any ambiguity has been removed by recent decisions of the UN and Council of Europe.

In other words in terms of human rights and equality discourse, there is no ambiguity – *for the purposes of human rights law sectarian identity is to be regarded as an ethnicity and sectarianism as a form of racism.* This emerges from general trends on race and ethnicity as well as specific discussion of racism in Northern Ireland.

[46]. Thus generally ethnicity has been read broadly and exclusively. Regarding the question of who belongs to which group, it is the opinion of the Committee

on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) that the identification of individuals as being members of a particular racial or ethnic group, 'shall, if no justification exists to the contrary, be based upon self-identification by the individuals concerned'.[17]

[47]. In other words should either Protestants or Catholics self-identify as an ethnic group this would be enough to bring them into CERD in the absence of justification to the contrary. Moreover, either group can self-identify in this way so it would be enough for one group to so identify. It is also clear that justification to the contrary should involve a higher standard of proof. If a state is to so justify, it has to do it in a robust and non-arbitrary manner. Thus, for example, India maintains the position that discrimination based on caste falls outside the scope of the ICERD Article 1 and the Convention is not applicable in this case. However, taking note of such argument and after having an extensive exchange of views with the State party, the Committee still "maintains its position expressed in general recommendation No. 29" and "reaffirms that discrimination based on the ground of caste is fully covered by article 1 of the Convention." The Irish Government has been similarly criticized for its failure to recognise Traveller ethnicity.

[48]. In terms of the specific case of sectarianism in Northern Ireland in international human rights discourse, there has been a process of discussion at both UN and Council of Europe levels. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission reiterating the position that sectarianism needs to be recognised as a form of racism put this to CERD to make clear that sectarian discrimination falls under Article 1(1) of the Convention, Which would make clear sectarianism is to be placed within the international framework for tackling racism in all its forms. In relation to this issue the Committee decisively ruled:

> Sectarian discrimination in Northern Ireland and physical attacks against religious minorities and their places of worship attract the provisions of ICERD in the context of "intersectionality" between religion and racial discrimination (CERD 2011: 2)

[49]. The Concluding Observations of the Committee also raised the specific concern that official anti-sectarian strategies in Northern Ireland ignore the

[17] Although CERD jurisprudence suggests that this is slightly more complicated. The ICERD practice is not to include any group solely differentiated on religion as falling under its definition of racial discrimination – it will only do so where there is overlap with the other indicators of ethnicity in article 1(1). 'Protestants' and 'Catholics' in Northern Ireland do overlap in this way – given descent, national identity and so on - this is where the 'intersectionality' issue comes from (Thornberry 2008).

CERD and the Durban Declaration frameworks. They asked the UK to re-examine this and specifically look at applying CERD/Durban to anti-sectarianism policy and to report back to the Committee at the next examination as to the advisability of adopting a holistic approach to all.

[50]. Later in 2011 the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for National Minorities directly addressed the exceptionalist approach:

> [T]he Advisory Committee finds the approach in the CSI Strategy to treat sectarianism as a distinct issue rather than as a form of racism problematic, as it allows sectarianism to fall outside the scope of accepted anti-discrimination and human rights protection standards. Similarly, the CSI Strategy has developed the concept of "good relations" apparently to substitute the concept of intercultural dialogue and integration of society. (CoE 2011: 25)[18]

[51]. The key point is that this issue doesn't have to be endlessly reworked. The key international bodies have already accepted the analysis that sectarianism is a form of racism. The UK does not appear to dispute this approach (In contrast, for example, to the Irish approach to Traveller ethnicity with CERD). While there may remain outstanding definitional issues in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland which will have implications for Northern Ireland, the key work is already completed. The core definition is that 'sectarianism is a form of racism'.

1.7. Defining sectarianism

[52]. In grounding any definition, it is important to note the distinction between *ethnicity* (alongside other identity grounds like religious or national identity) which is either 'good' or neutral and to be protected and *racism* (which is generally accepted as 'bad' and which should be eradicated). Both of these elements are central to the defining process in racism and yet they involve very different dynamics. Thus if the process is focussed on *ethnicity* as a qualifier for protection from racism we get something akin to the Mandla v Lee judgement on ethnicity in England and Wales outlined above.

[53]. If, in contrast, we focus on *racism* we get something like the definitive UNESCO *Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice*:

[18] As if to further illustrate 'intersectionality', this document also describes sectarianism as 'anti-Irish racism'. While some sectarianism in Scotland is unambiguously anti-Irish racism, some isn't and requires a broader, more inclusive categorisation (like 'sectarianism' or 'ethnicity').

> 1. Any theory which involves the claim that racial or ethnic groups are inherently superior or inferior, thus implying that some would be entitled to dominate or eliminate others, presumed to be inferior, or which bases value judgements on racial differentiation, has no scientific foundation and is contrary to the moral and ethical principles of humanity.
>
> 2. Racism includes racist ideologies, prejudiced attitudes, discriminatory behaviour, structural arrangements and institutionalised practices resulting in racial inequality as well as the fallacious notion that discriminatory relations between groups are morally and scientifically justifiable; it is reflected in discriminatory provisions in legislation or regulations and discriminatory practices as well as in anti-social beliefs and acts; it hinders the development of its victims, perverts those who practice it, divides nations internally, impedes international co-operation and gives rise to political tensions between peoples; it is contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and, consequently, seriously disturbs international peace and security.
>
> 3. Racial prejudice, historically linked with inequalities in power, reinforced by economic and social differences between individuals and groups, and still seeking today to justify such inequalities, is totally without justification. (UNESCO, 1978).

[54]. There are explicit (and implicit) definitions of both ethnicity and racism in the ICERD process. In the context of Northern Ireland, therefore, defining begs two separate questions. First, are the categories 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' ethnicities (or, alternatively, 'races' or 'colours' or 'languages' or 'nationalities' or 'national or ethnic origins')? Second, is sectarianism a form of racism? As suggested above, the literature is in comprehensive agreement that inequality and discrimination in Northern Ireland has *something* to do with ethnicity – this in itself is a sufficient standard of proof for protection under international mechanisms. Ethnicity is probably the most permissive of all these categories, so it is the simplest to address but we can also observe in passing that discrimination and inequality in Northern Ireland has also included many of the other CERD and ECRI categories.

[55]. In other words, providing we accept that there is no reasonable case for arguing that sectarianism has *nothing* to with ethnicity and racism, we have a starting point for a more constructive engagement with international standards and practices on racism. Regarding sectarianism as a form of racism is the intellectually soundest and most practical approach. In this context the *defining work falls on the word racism rather than the word sectarianism*.

[56]. For example, the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ) draws directly on The Council of Europe specialist body in the field, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) to move this forward (CAJ 2013a). ECRI, in its recommendation on key elements of legislation against racism and racial discrimination, defines racism as follows:

> "racism" shall mean the belief that a ground such as race,[19] colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons.

[57]. Thus using the ICERD definition we get something like the CAJ suggestion:

> Sectarianism shall mean the belief that a ground such as religion, political opinion, language, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons. (CAJ 2013a)[20]

[58]. By implication there is something about group identities in Northern Ireland that qualifies them for protection from racism – in other words, the 'perceived religions' 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' are ethnicities in the context of Northern Ireland. As we have observed, other categories – such as 'national identity' or 'race' - would clearly apply even if ethnicity did not. For example, the instruction that, 'No Irish need apply' would be unlawful currently in Northern Ireland as it is in England and Wales. In such a case, at minimum, those citizens of Northern Ireland who hold Irish passports would have recourse to protection by the Race Relations Order on the grounds of both race and national identity.

[59]. This point also begs the question of some of the practical difficulties of defining sectarianism in law. The current 'separated discourses' approach to race and sectarian equality legislation at least raises the issue of having different legislative regimes for different categories of equality. At present, this is dealt with by trying to keep the regimes separate. For example, the RRO is framed as *not* including any group defined by religious belief and political

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[19] ECRI qualifies the use of the term Race by stating "Since all human beings belong to the same species, ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different "races". However, in this Recommendation ECRI uses this term in order to ensure that those persons who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to "another race" are not excluded from the protection provided for by the legislation."

[20] 'CAJ, 'urges the definition of sectarianism in legislation to draw on international standards relating to racism and draws attention to the above definition, itself derived from recommendations from the Council of Europe specialist agency'. Committee on the Administration of Justice, August 2013.

opinion. Likewise FETO does not allow claims on nationality.[21] Of course, the simple solution to this is to accept that sectarianism is a form of racism and integrate anti-racism within one ethnicity and racism regime. Such integration should take place on a best practice rather than a lowest common denominator approach. In other words, disparities between the ant-racist and anti-sectarian regimes should be resolved on a 'levelling up' rather than a 'levelling down' basis. In fact, there has been an ongoing discussion regarding a commitment to a single equality act for Northern Ireland - and this could have led to an easy resolution of this issue.

[60]. This does not mean of course that sectarianism should *not* be regarded as a *specific form* of racism. In other words there is every reason to continue to use the term 'sectarianism' as a discrete subset of all racisms in Northern Ireland. This approach helps name the specificity of the dynamic between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland whilst acknowledging that this belongs within the wider paradigm of ethnicity and racism. Like 'antisemitism' or 'Islamophobia' or 'antigypsyism', the recognition of specificity facilitates understanding and addressing of specific features within the context of broader work.[22] In the context of England and Wales anti-Irish racism has been used in just this way to distinguish between the experience of the Irish in Britain and BME groups.

[61]. Likewise, interventions on antisemitism will be different from interventions on antigypsyism, not because they are not both forms of racism but because the specificity of their impacts sometimes demands a differential approach. In other words, there remains a point in continuing to engage with the question of the specificity of sectarianism beyond recognition that it is a form of racism.

[62]. It is also the case the BME communities will want to maintain recognition of the specificity of their experience of racism in Northern Ireland and the continued use of the term sectarianism in the sense above allows this to happen.

[63]. Moreover, it is likely that definitional issues will continue to be live in Northern Ireland because the issue of specificity will be regarded as central to anti-sectarian practice. In this context, the definition of sectarianism still remains important. (In other words, we cannot let the word racism do *all* the work.) In this vein the Institute for Conflict Research (ICR) suggests:

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[21] This also suggests that the simplest legislative device to remove the separation of racism and sectarianism in discrimination law in Northern Ireland would be to remove either or both of these exclusions from existing legislation.

[22] CERD's own work on 'people of African descent' is a further example specific to the ICERD process.

> Sectarianism should be considered as a form of racism specific to the Irish context. Sectarianism is the diversity of prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes, behaviours and practices between members of the two majority communities in and about Northern Ireland, who may be defined as Catholic or Protestant; Irish or British; Nationalist or Unionist; Republican or Loyalist; or combinations thereof. (Jarman 2012: 10)

[64]. My own definitional work is broadly similar to these approaches. It also makes clear the centrality of violence to the dynamics of sectarianism.[23] This focus on violence is at least a reminder of why international protection matters so much. While much of the discussion focuses on discrimination or 'good relations, in Northern Ireland sectarianism is most brutally characterised by – and experienced as – violence. This includes assault, intimidation and widespread population movement, 'ethnic cleansing' and a society divided by 'peace walls' – alongside the ubiquity of the aforementioned 'genocidal imperative'. In practical terms this means that the criminal justice system should be at least as central to anti-sectarianism as anti-discrimination or 'good relations' mechanisms.

[65]. It is perhaps useful to try and conceptualize these different dimensions to sectarianism as help to the defining process (see Table B below). The key issue is that any definition must be capable of embracing the *totality* of sectarianism – it is dangerous and counterproductive to equate it solely with one aspect – such as discrimination or 'good relations'. Moreover, while generally we might expect a synergy between these dimensions, this isn't necessarily the case. Crucially any definition must be able to encompass and critique what the state does or does not do – alongside the widespread tendency to focus on 'evil' behaviour by individuals or communities. It bears emphasis that each of these areas can learn from existing good practice on race and racism in the UK and elsewhere.

[23] I have suggested the following definition: 'Sectarianism in Ireland is that changing set of ideas and practices, including, crucially, acts of violence, which serves to construct and reproduce the difference between, and unequal status of, Irish Protestants and Catholics'. (McVeigh 1995: 643).

Table B: State responses to Sectarianism in Northern Ireland		
Criminal Justice	Discrimination	Good Relations
Addresses sectarian violence and intimidation. Key issues include sectarian hate crime and 'chill factor' but also full gamut of race and criminal justice issues addressed by Macpherson Report. It should therefore be able to engage reflexively with the notions of 'institutional sectarianism' and 'institutional racism'. It should provide baseline data that is at least as robust as CJS statistics on race.	Addresses sectarian discrimination. Key issues includes discrimination in employment and goods and services (including crucially housing and education). Includes traditional fair treatment interventions against sectarian discrimination. It should provide baseline data that is at least as robust as EHRC statistics on ethnicity.	Addresses community/good relations between 'Protestants' and 'Catholics' Key issues include need to define good relations interventions in context of any legally grounded definition of sectarianism. Should abandon 'exceptionalism' and focus on the process of 'tackling prejudice' and 'promoting understanding'.

[66]. Broadly, however, there is not a huge difference between the CAJ and ICR definitions and either of them should be able to address the full range of manifestations of sectarianism from 'institutional racism' to 'good relations'. The CAJ offers a definition rooted in international law; the ICR focuses more on the specificity of the dynamic in Northern Ireland. Crucially both definitions recognise that sectarianism should be seen as a form of racism. The ICR process shows an ongoing engagement with the notion of sectarianism as a form of racism - by both NGOs and the statutory sector - particularly significantly key actors in the criminal justice system CJS (Jarman 2012). Moreover both approaches recognise that there is a pressing need for clarity of definition in support of anti-sectarian practice. Whatever the nuance here, the key point is that *there should be a definition of sectarianism embedded in law*.

[67]. On this the 'Together' strategy states that, 'appropriate consensus will be sought around issues including a definition of sectarianism in the draft legislation emerging from the strategy' (OFMDFM 2014: 19). CAJ and others welcomed this important aim, and stressed the importance of correctly defining sectarianism in legislation. In the present context, despite the term being regularly used by public authorities, there is often no official definition. At other times restrictive or vague definitions are adopted that tend to defer to limited interpersonal manifestations of sectarianism - particularly hate crimes. The tentative definition offered in Together threatens to continue this process:

> For the purposes of this Strategy, sectarianism is defined as: threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour or attitudes towards a

> person by reason of that person's religious belief or political opinion; or to an individual as a member of such a group. (OFMDFM 2014: 19)[24]

[68]. As has already been suggested, it is neither helpful nor sustainable to argue in terms of the e*xceptionalism* of sectarianism. As is detailed above, the primary treaty bodies dealing with anti-racism at United Nations and Council of Europe level have both stated that sectarianism in Northern Ireland should be treated as a specific form of racism. Moreover we can suggest that this approach is much more likely to make the notion of ethnicity 'work' in Northern Ireland. It is important that the concept is made 'fit for purpose' in terms of the provision of baseline data. Currently the census defines ethnicity primarily in terms of *colour* – thus 98.21% of residents are defined solely as 'white'.[25] This does nothing to capture the ethnic complexity of Northern Ireland and nothing to help construct policy or practice on ethnicity. There is an urgent need to find a methodology for 'deconstructing whiteness' in order to provide a statistical basis for equality work – as well as all the many other issues that might correlate with ethnicity. Regarding 'Protestants' and 'Catholics' as separate ethnicities would allow a much more nuanced and accurate approach to ethnicity and equality in contemporary Northern Ireland.

[69]. It is important to suggest that the reference to international human rights principles need not be the whole story on understanding sectarianism as a form of racism. International law indicates the minimum standards established by the international community and these, of course, should be adhered to. It is, however, possible to suggest that the British state position post-Macpherson provided a stronger, more proactive definition of racism, particularly *institutional racism*. It would be odd, therefore, to ignore this in the context of another part of the UK, particularly in the context of reporting to international mechanisms. The recognition of institutional racism was the major step forward in the Macpherson process in England and Wales. It is possible to suggest that it has not been adopted in NI with regard to either racism against BME groups or sectarianism. While meeting the minimum standards enforced by international mechanisms would be an important first step towards better anti-sectarian practice in Northern Ireland, there is every reason to simultaneously integrate best practice definitions from England and Wales.

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[24] This definition was put forward for the NI 2011 Justice Act – to define not sectarianism per se – but sectarian chanting at sports matches. It almost went through but fell as it was argued that this definition might outlaw 'legitimate' political chanting at football matches. Practice in Scotland has seen similar difficulties with 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' expressions of political opinion.

[25] Source: NI Census 2011: Table KS201NI: Ethnic Group.

[70]. Finally, in terms of international standards and the ongoing debate around defining sectarianism in Northern Ireland, perhaps the most questionable aspect of existing definitions is the use of *political opinion* as a proxy indicator for ethnicity. (This element is also retained in the CAJ definition.) 'Political opinion' is included as a 'ground' in anti-discrimination law in NI because it was and is a basis for indirect discrimination (or more simplistically because the legislator's intent was to prevent the defence of 'I didn't discriminate because s/he was Protestant/Catholic but because s/he was nationalist/unionist').

[71]. More generally, however, it is usual to regard 'political identity' as a formal choice – in the same way that most religious belief is a formal choice. Whether such choices need the same level of protection as ethnicity from international law is a moot point. This becomes even more problematic at the point at which such choices undermine other people's human rights. For example, it would seem difficult to persuade most people that the right to be a Nazi Party member is deserving of international protection.

[72]. In the ICCPR, for example, 'political or other opinion' is protected separately from race. Moreover, international standards do not include political opinion in constructions of ethnicity. In other words, the international practice is that ideological/party affiliation shouldn't sit within 'race' and ethnicity protections. This may be a separate philosophical discussion and it bears emphasis that the 'political opinion' ground was included within the fair employment paradigm for good reason. My own opinion, however, is that this should be removed from race and equality precisely because it does not sit easily with international practice. Arguably, once sectarianism is regarded as a form of racism, and the categories 'Protestant' and 'Catholic' as ethnicities, the reasons for the inclusion of 'political opinion' in fair employment legislation are removed.

1.8. Ethnicity Denial

[73]. It is important that once the implications of ICERD and CoE rulings are understood that they are followed through. While it is both positive and crucial to see that there appears to be no current ethnicity denial by the UK state regarding Northern Ireland Protestants and Catholics, there is some evidence of resistance by some non-state actors. Despite the evidence, ethnicity denial continues through the exceptionalism of sectarianism approach. In this context it is useful to look at some of this debate in terms of broader international law on ethnicity. First, because this helps further clarify issues around 'ethnicity denial' and what it is appropriate for governments to both do and not do in terms of repudiating the ethnicity of different groups. Second, because the current position of some NGOs and the NI Government position

has profoundly negative implications for international law and practice on this issue (McVeigh 2009).

[74]. As we have already seen, the general principle of ethnicity recognition is well established in international law. Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes that "in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language".

[75]. This approach is confirmed by the UN Human Rights Committee: 'The question of the existence of minorities is addressed by the Human Rights Committee in its general comment No. 23 (1994) on the rights of minorities, which elaborates that "the existence of an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority in a given State party does not depend upon a decision by that State party but requires to be established by objective criteria". This approach is further supported by CERD and ILO confirmation of the principle of 'self-identification'.[26]

[76]. The issue of ethnicity denial was further interrogated in the 2011 Mission to Rwanda. Ethnicity was not to be ignored or denied even for the best reasons (legacy of genocide):

> 12. While the independent expert recognizes the unique history of Rwanda, the policies of the Government must be assessed as against the State's obligations under international human rights law. Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes that "in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group,
>
> to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language". The question of the existence of minorities is addressed by the Human Rights Committee in its general comment No. 23 (1994) on the rights of minorities, which elaborates that "the

[26] The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stated in its general recommendation No. 8 (1990) on identification with a particular racial or ethnic group (art. 1, paras. 1 and 4) that "such identification shall, if no justification exists to the contrary, be based upon self-identification by the individual concerned". The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries also recognizes the principle of self-identification. Article 1, paragraph 2, states that "self-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply".

> existence of an ethnic, religious or linguistic minority in a given State party does not depend upon a decision by that State party but requires to be established by objective criteria".
>
> 13. Considering identification with particular racial or ethnic groups, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has stated in its general recommendation No. 8 (1990) on identification with a particular racial or ethnic group (art. 1, paras. 1 and 4) that "such identification shall, if no justification exists to the contrary, be based upon self-identification by the individual concerned"….
>
> 14. The right of individuals to freely identify themselves as belonging to an ethnic, religious or linguistic group is therefore well-established in international law. It is also notable that the existence of a common language or culture does not necessarily negate the possibility of ethnic difference, but may rather be evidence of assimilation of different population groups over generations. Domestic law relevant to ethnicity, identity, minority status, equality and non-discrimination should recognize such rights and ensure that no individual or group suffers from any disadvantage or discriminatory treatment on the basis of their freely chosen identity as belonging to (or not belonging to) an ethnic, religious, linguistic or any other group. (McDougall 2011)

[77]. In short, the protection of ethnic identity is well grounded in international law. Moreover, ethnicity denial – even when it occurs for professedly positive reasons - is not tolerated by international human rights mechanisms. It bears emphasis that neither non-state actors nor *governments should deny ethnicity without careful assessment of the evidence and without consideration of the implications of such a policy*. There is no evidence that the UK government would want to deny the recognition of sectarianism as a form of racism in the CERD and CoE analyses nor any indication that it would refuse to supply appropriate data to either body to help it ensure best practice in delivering equality for Protestant and Catholics in Northern Ireland. But if this were to occur it would be a very serious matter with significant consequences.

1.9.Conclusions

[78]. There has been an increasing focus on race and *intersectionality* in recent years. Recent discourse and practice across difference jurisdictions in the UK has also supported the idea of *convergence* between religious and race discrimination. This further compounds the implicit intersectionality between religion and race embedded in UK law since at least *Mandla v Lee* and copperfastened by the 2010 *Equality Act*. In this context, racism is a clearer and better descriptive for sectarianism in Northern Ireland than 'institutional

religious intolerance'. 'Perceived religious identity' or 'community background' as it is understood in Northern Ireland reflects ethnicity rather than 'faith'. Moreover, following the deliberations of CERD and CoE, even if some academics and good relations practitioners want to continue the wider debate about sectarianism in Northern Ireland *sui generis*, in terms of international law and discourse the process is concluded. Thus the current reality is that whatever else continues, in the context of reporting to and meeting international obligations, the UK and NI governments must operate on the basis that sectarianism is a form of racism and that 'perceived religion' or 'community background' is an ethnicity.

[79]. More generally it is possible to suggest that intellectual integrity and practice would be improved if the conclusions of the international human rights community were to be accepted and applied in other contexts, notably in 'good relations' approaches. Those who engage in ethnicity denial would do well to remember the advice of the NI Human Rights Commission: 'This risks non-human rights compliant approaches, and non-application of the well-developed normative tools to challenge prejudice, promote tolerance and tackle discrimination found in international standards. In particular, it seriously limits the application of ICERD to Northern Ireland, and therefore obligations on the state to tackle sectarianism along with other forms of racism' (2011). More broadly, accepting sectarianism as a form of racism means that much of the *defining work falls on the word racism rather than the word sectarianism*. Thus what is best and most effective in anti-racist analysis and practice can be mobilised to address sectarianism without losing recognition of the specificity attached to the term.

[80]. For the most part the objections to the 'sectarianism is a form of racism' thesis appear to be practical. There clearly are concerns that integrating race and fair employment law would produce contradictions such as uneven protections between different inequalities and 'double dipping' – the attempt to bring a case on the grounds of both fair employment and ethnicity. But both of these objections have been around since the advent of anti-discrimination legislation and neither of these is insurmountable. Moreover there is now a simple template in the operation of the single equality act in the UK. From a human rights point of view, we would expect protections to be 'evened' *up* rather than *down* but this is a technical rather than jurisprudential issue.

[81]. The only other argument that is offered is a 'tactical' one – it is suggested that it is in the interests of either BME groups or Protestants and Catholics to separate the politics of racism from the politics of sectarianism in Northern Ireland. It is dangerous to go too far down the road of 'tactical' discussions of the meanings of terms – international law definitions tend towards 'minimum standards' and they rightly point towards just conclusions however politically

unpalatable the consequences. Nevertheless the key issues in terms of ethnicity and Northern Ireland bear discussion in terms of their broader political impact. First, the tactical approach has not resolved profound issues in terms of BME communities and human rights – Northern Ireland remains in a 'pre-Macpherson state' with widespread and routine 'ethnic cleansing' of BME communities. Second, the notion that human rights discourse alienates Protestants and unionists has changed somewhat in the post-GFA state – certainly the application of protections to sectarian identities is much more likely to offer practical protection to Protestants now than it did thirty or forty years ago when Protestant/Catholic inequality was much more one-sided and absolute.

[82]. This final point that bears emphasis, initially in sociological and political terms but with human rights implications. Traditionally in Northern Ireland anti-discrimination was a paradigm that was seen to disproportionately 'advantage' Catholics. In so far as Catholics were disadvantaged by institutional sectarianism, this was probably broadly true. Although of course this should not matter in terms of human rights discourse, it was central to political discourse around rights and equality. In principle, of course, both Protestants and Catholics were and are protected by anti-discrimination measures and this, of course, is how it should be. But in the new form of state emerging in Northern Ireland, the practical implications of this dynamic have changed and continue to change. In this context such protections may be just as important in reality – as well as principle – to Protestants as Catholics. As Catholics increasingly form the majority in the education sector and the workforce and the state itself, human rights and ethnic equality measures may become as practically important to Protestants in the future as they were to Catholics in the past.

[83]. The Northern Ireland state in 2014 is very different to the one that repudiated the need for anti-racism legislation in 1965 (McVeigh 2013). It is possible to suggest that this new, post-GFA state faces its central challenge in addressing ethnicity and racism. The unwanted sobriquet of 'race hate capital of the world' is one indication of a profound problem with racism while on-going political crisis around culture and identity illustrate the continued potential for widespread sectarian conflict. In other words making sense of the specificity of the dynamics of ethnicity and racism is not a minor footnote to understanding contemporary Northern Ireland – it is crucial to the success of the historic compromise of the GFA.

In this context securing a legal definition of sectarianism grounded in international law is central to human rights and equality and, ultimately, to peace itself.

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Good Relations in Northern Ireland:

Towards a Definition in Law

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Good Relations in Northern Ireland: Towards a definition in law[1]

Introduction

[1]. This paper gives effect to the commissioning of an expert briefing paper on 'Good Relations in Northern Ireland: towards finding a definition in law'. The paper was to be presented at an Equality Coalition roundtable discussion. The paper was required to cover matters such as: the evolution, interpretation, application and impact of the 'good relations' paradigm in Northern Ireland from its inclusion as s75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, through a 'shared future' to the 'Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI) and 'Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC)' strategy; the relationship between 'good relations' on human rights and anti-racism (including sectarianism) goals; the definition of 'good relations' in law in Great Britain and recent debates on incorporating a definition in Northern Ireland. While it stands alone, it can be usefully read in tandem with a previous paper 'Sectarianism in Northern Ireland: Towards a definition in Law', also commissioned by the Equality Coalition.[2] There are key areas of overlap and many of the challenges of finding a definition in law for good relations are mirrored in the similar attempts to define sectarianism.

[2]. Recent discussions in Northern Ireland have confirmed that there is little consensus on what good relations involves. There is arguably even less agreement on any definition in law although most actors agree on the *need* for a definition.[3] Unfortunately, there is little immediate assistance for any such definition in wider international law – this is not a term that can draw immediately on any existing template. Unlike with human rights or equality, there are no obvious 'minimum standards' on good relations to which we might appeal. Of course, good relations appears to be a societal good – it is hard to be 'against it'. It references a whole

[1] A draft of this paper was presented at an Equality Coalition roundtable in Belfast in September 2014. The paper was informed and improved by the discussion at that roundtable. Since the roundtable was conducted under Chatham House Rules in order to encourage unfettered dialogue, individual contributions are not identified but their contribution is much appreciated. The draft was also improved by comments from Daniel Holder of CAJ, Emma Patterson-Bennett of the Equality Coalition, Patricia McKeown of UNISON and Professor Bill Rolston. Remaining errors of fact or judgement remain my own.

[2] Expert Briefing Paper by Dr Robbie McVeigh Sectarianism in Northern Ireland Towards a definition in Law published by the CAJ-UNISON convened Equality Coalition.

[3] This consensus on the need for definition was echoed in the roundtable discussion. While participants brought very different perspectives on good relations to the discussion, there was broad consensus on the requirement for definition.

series of social objectives - like reconciliation, integration, sharing or interdependence – that are both hard to oppose and hard to define. Each of these words has multiple interpretations. Like peace itself, the notion of 'good relations' seems to straddle a whole continuum from the absence of conflict to the presence of justice.

[3]. At best the good relations paradigm comes from a different perspective than human rights and equality; at worst, it can be an *alternative to* human rights and equality. For example, its predecessor community relations paradigm emerged when African American resistance to racism was causing widespread unrest across America cities. But it was not referenced when African Americans were enslaved, or when segregation was entrenched in legislation or when lynching was widespread. In other words, the 'goodness' of relations can be very one-sided and subjective. It is telling that the community relations intervention in the USA, as characterised by Lyndon B Johnson, was to be a *solution to the civil rights movement* rather than a solution to institutional racism (CRS 2014).

[4]. In general, therefore, there are broad concerns regarding the tension between community/good relations approaches to conflict and division and those based on equality and human rights. In Northern Ireland this has taken more concrete form around the potential of community and good relations approaches to undermine the equality and human rights obligations of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) – although the primacy of the equality duty remains embedded in law. Moreover there has been a specific concern in Northern Ireland around the practical 'misuse' of the good relations duty to avoid or evade equality obligations (CAJ 2013, 2014, 2014a).[4] There are also specific concerns around the ability of the paradigm to address - rather than disguise - ongoing racist violence against Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities across Northern Ireland (McVeigh and Rolston 2007).

[5]. These issues acknowledged, there is no getting away from the likelihood that good relations will continue to frame policy in Northern Ireland. There is a developing practice around the paradigm - in Great Britain as well as Northern Ireland. The British model provides a key comparator for work in Northern Ireland. This 'GB approach' emerged from race equality work which has employed the community relations paradigm since the 1960s. Moreover, the term good relations *is* defined in law in England and Wales and Scotland and this remains a key referent in discussions in Northern Ireland. This wider good relations work helps us resist the tendency in Northern Ireland towards *exceptionalism* - the insistence that good relations are both profoundly important and undefined and undefinable. If the good relations paradigm is to be given an increased statutory importance, it needs to be

[4] For example, CAJ and others have been specifically concerned by the ECNI decision to use Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) towards good relations objectives (CAJ 2014: iii).

grounded in a definition that meets the basic principles of clarity of law and allows meaningful measurement across objective indicators of success or failure.

The evolution of the community relations paradigm

[6]. The community relations paradigm emerged from the federal state response to civil rights protests in the USA. The US Community Relations Service was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and remains within the US Department of Justice.[5] It describes its contemporary mission thus:

> *The Community Relations Service (CRS) helps local communities address community conflicts and tensions arising from differences of race, color, and national origin. CRS also helps communities develop strategies to prevent and respond to violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or disability. (CRS 2014)*[6]

[7]. The term 'community relations' was subsequently adopted in the context of early British 'race relations' interventions. The Race Relations Act of 1968 introduced and resourced a national, statutory Community Relations Commission and a series of local Community Relations Councils. A related but distinct intervention appeared with the development of a community relations paradigm for addressing sectarian division in Northern Ireland (McVeigh 2002; McEvoy et al. 2006, Morrow 2013). The appeal of the paradigm in terms of the Northern Ireland conflict was obvious – institutionalised violence and discrimination was resulting in widespread unrest and unambiguously 'bad' relations between different communities. As McEvoy et al suggest: 'From its inception, particularly to the more progressive elements of Unionism, community relations was arguably always a softer and more palatable alternative to rights discourse with its inevitable critique of the state'. (2006: 86)

[5] As CRS records: '"It could be one of the longest and most far reaching steps toward an ultimate solution to the civil rights movement that can be taken." With those words, then-Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, on January 20, 1959, introduced a bill to establish the Community Relations Service. Five years later, CRS was established under Title X of the Civil Rights Act, which President Johnson signed into law on July 2, 1964' (CRS 2014).

[6] In response to recent events in Ferguson, Missouri, the US Attorney General announced: 'In order to truly begin the process of healing, we must also see an end to the acts of violence in the streets of Ferguson. Those who have been peacefully demonstrating should join with law enforcement in condemning the actions of looters and others seeking to enflame tensions. To assist on this front, the Department will be dispatching additional representatives from the Community Relations Service, including [CRS] Director Grande Lum, to Ferguson. These officials will continue to convene stakeholders whose cooperation is critical to keeping the peace' (US Department of Justice 2014).

[8]. While this emerging paradigm drew directly on US and UK community relations approaches to managing racism and anti-racism, it was resistant to identifying sectarianism as a racism. This was ironic since the analysis was almost identical. For example, the template for community relations intervention in Northern Ireland - 'Community Conflict Skills' (Fitzduff 1988) - was borrowed from a US manual on community relations which focussed solely on race. Despite the obvious resonances, however, community relations proved reluctant to address the racism experienced by BME communities in Northern Ireland.[7] It consequently played little part in the efforts to extend some form of British race equality legislation to Northern Ireland. This all changed, however, in the wake of the GFA *even though neither community relations nor good relations had featured in the GFA negotiations.*

[9]. The shift from community relations to good relations was a change imposed by the Northern Ireland Act 1998 rather than emerging organically from anti-racism and community relations practice. Even as late as 2004, the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council reported that: 'an agreed definition for the promotion of good relations does not exist' (2004:6). Nevertheless, when the Community Relations Council launched its *A Good Relations Framework: An Approach to the development of Good Relations*, 'dealing with' racism had been unambiguously integrated into the community relations/ good relations paradigm:

> *Those who have worked on anti-racism and anti-sectarianism approaches in Northern Ireland have acquired decades of experience. The promotion of good relations requires that both these areas of expertise be joined together to provide an approach that will enable* ***racism and sectarianism to be addressed equally and together****. (2004: 5, emphasis added)*

[10]. Historically the paradigm was neither a rights- nor an equality-based approach to racism but rather a state-led conflict management approach to addressing widespread social unrest consequent upon racism. In other words, good relations does not easily sit within a rights-based framework. This said, in both the US and Great Britain it is clearly connected to racism and the consequences of racism – which suggests at least some overlap with the conflict in Northern Ireland. Moreover, while it emerged from other dynamics, it is constantly in dialogue with rights and equality based approaches. In England and Wales and Scotland the community/good relations paradigm evolved *within* race equality legislation – it was a subset of wider attempts to address racial discrimination and inequality. In this sense 'relations' were regarded as integral to the equality project. It was fairly obviously that 'race relations' – including both racist and anti-racist violence - could not be managed without some movement towards equality and human rights that at least addressed the most egregious aspects of racial inequality. Thus in both Northern

[7] Thus the definitive CRC publication 'Approaches to Community Relations Work' made no reference to race or racism (Fitzduff 1991).

Ireland and Great Britain notions about improved 'relations' tended to be integrated with state equality projects. But this has not found much wider resonance. For example in the UK Johnson and Tatam suggest:

> *Good relations do not seem to have much salience beyond the UK at this stage; and even that is somewhat limited as we come to discuss later. Indeed, some international contacts with whom we explored the idea felt unable to contribute much due to the fact that good relations was a 'very Anglo-Saxon' concept. (2009: 26)*

[11]. This remains a legitimate analysis. It might be argued that the failure to find any wider audience for good relations is evidence enough of the limitations of the concept. From this perspective, good relations might be better repudiated than defined and institutionalised. But such an approach would have to disregard the currency that the paradigm continues to have in Northern Ireland.

Moreover, it would have to posit some better paradigm for addressing the issues currently bundled around good relations. Unlike the case with equality and human rights, there is no simple alternative international template.

Interculturalism: good relations in international law?

[12]. Many organisations, including CAJ, have been keen to anchor Northern Ireland policy development in terms of best practice internationally. In particular, it is argued that equality and human rights work should be grounded in international law. This draws on a vast well of international experience as well as providing a key template of 'minimum standards' for any local legislation. Unfortunately the notion of 'good relations' does not feature in international law. As Johnson and Tatam suggest:

> *There is a lack of international material that has a direct bearing on good relations. Many of the concepts described above have an international resonance – in particular contact theory, social capital and human security. Some others, notably community cohesion and integration … are increasingly being used internationally having started off as intellectual approaches rooted in British circumstances. As such, we have found* ***nothing*** *that could be directly applicable to the idea of 'good relations' as set out in the [UK] Equality and Human Rights Commission's mandate. (2009: 26, emphasis added)*

[13]. This idea that there is *nothing* that is directly applicable to good relations stands in stark contrast to the way in human rights and equality measures can be directly linked to international law. This is not completely surprising, however. As we have already seen, its antecedent 'community relations' paradigm emerged from a conflict management paradigm rather than from equality or human rights discourse. There is little hard law to support the specific process in Northern Ireland.

[14]. Arguably, however, something akin to 'good relations' is at least implicit in some of the founding principles of international law. For example, in the Preamble to the UN Charter we find: 'We the peoples of the United Nations determined... to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours'. Beyond this kind of fairly vague sentiment, however, there is not much immediate help in international law for any attempt to ground the concept in law in Northern Ireland. The nearest concept which does find support in international law and practice is the notion of 'interculturalism' or 'intercultural dialogue'. This analysis is supported by Wigfield and Turner in their work on good relations in Britain who – in contrast to Johnson and Tatam – note the resonance with interculturalism (2010: 7).[8]

[15]. The notion of *interculturalism* (sometimes also 'interculturality' or 'intercultural dialogue') has been particularly promoted by the Council of Europe, not least as an alternative to 'multiculturalism' (Barrett 2013). But it is also used by the European Union and the United Nations. Interculturalism shares some of the ambiguity attached to 'good relations' – it is definitively *not* a well-defined legal construct. Nevertheless it clearly resonates with aspects of good relations and it has a much wider international reference. Essentially the notion of Interculturalism encourages exchange and interaction rather than either assimilation or segregation. It embraces openness to change from 'both sides' of any cultural interface - the majority population as well as from minority groups.

[16]. The CoE/European Commission Intercultural Cities project provides a useful definition:

> *Rather than ignoring diversity (as with guest-worker approaches), denying diversity (as with assimilationist approaches), or overemphasising diversity and thereby reinforcing walls between culturally distinct groups (as with multiculturalism), interculturalism is about explicitly recognising the value of diversity while doing everything possible to increase interaction, mixing and hybridisation between cultural communities. Interculturalism is also about addressing issues of cultural conflict or tension (religious customs and requirements, communitarianism, women's rights etc.) openly though public debate, with the involvement of all stakeholders. (CoE 2014)*

[17]. This approach has brought good relations in Northern Ireland onto the radar of different international bodies in reference to implications on anti-racist work. For example in 2011 the Council of Europe Advisory Committee on the Framework

[8] Interculturalism has also been a particularly significant paradigm in the Republic of Ireland – for example, the national body was named 'National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism'. This has become less influential, however, as this state anti-racist infrastructure has been largely dismantled over recent years.

Convention for National Minorities directly addressed the exceptionalist approach to sectarianism in Northern Ireland:

> *[T]he Advisory Committee finds the approach in the CSI Strategy to treat sectarianism as a distinct issue rather than as a form of racism problematic, as it allows sectarianism to fall outside the scope of accepted anti-discrimination and human rights protection standards. Similarly, the CSI Strategy has developed the concept of "good relations" apparently to substitute the concept of intercultural dialogue and integration of society. (CoE 2011: 25)*

[18]. In other words, the CoE is making it clear that *with regard to racism at least* the specificity of good relations work in Northern Ireland does not permit abandoning the broader lessons of an interculturalist approach.

[19]. As was argued in *Sectarianism in Northern Ireland: Towards a definition in Law* (McVeigh 2014), the crucial point is that this issue does not have to be endlessly reworked. The key international bodies have already accepted the analysis that sectarianism is a form of racism. It is sensible to let the word racism do most of the 'work' in Northern Ireland. In other words, once sectarianism is regarded as a form of racism, we can get on with the work of addressing racism rather than worrying endlessly about definitions of sectarianism. But this also means that the discipline of anti-racist paradigm should be applied to 'good relations'. In this context it does at least overlap with the notion of interculturalism or intercultural dialogue. Moreover, the international monitoring bodies are at least encouraging 'good relations' to be seen in this way. Neither is this process all one way. There is some evidence that government in Northern Ireland has been addressing this point. For example, there is reference to interculturalism in the TBUC strategy: 'We believe that an approach based on intercultural dialogue can help facilitate greater integration and build a more united community' (OFMDFM 2013: 79, 88-9).

[20]. Thus interculturalism may well offer a way forward in terms of practice that at least overlaps with 'good relations' and is grounded in international law and practice. The key point is that international monitoring bodies are saying that good relations is not enough on racism and sectarianism. Moreover OFMDFM are at least acknowledging this issue in the TBUC strategy. There is certainly a window of opportunity for further work in this vein, especially as it dovetails with developments in good relations in England and Wales and Scotland. This does not, however, mean that any convergence of good relations and interculturalism is a silver bullet that might end tensions and difficulties associated with the definition of good relations in Northern Ireland. The interculturalism paradigm is a far from finished article anywhere. While it is an increasingly important international term and it does provide a wider frame of reference for Northern Ireland based work, it does not provide a simple template for good relations work – nor any simple transferable definition. It is important, however, that the development of definitions for good relations makes

explicit the resonance between the two terms and encourages ongoing dialogue with best practice on Interculturalism in Europe and elsewhere in the world.

The evolution, interpretation, application and impact of the 'good relations' paradigm in Northern Ireland

[21]. Broadly there were three key stages in the evolution of good relations paradigm in Northern Ireland. First it was named in legislation in Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This new phase in 'relations' interventions by the state did two key things that continue to frame discussions around good relations in Northern Ireland. First – drawing on developments in Britain around race equality - it signalled that '*good relations*' rather than '*community relations'* was the defining concept in this new statutory approach. Second, it made clear that this notion of good relations was to *include* race alongside Protestant/Catholic relations and *exclude* other equality grounds.

[22]. Later the role of good relations expanded further and it became the key framing device for 'normalisation' in Northern Ireland in the *A Shared Future* document of 2005. Finally, it became a leitmotif of the attempts to address ongoing tensions and conflict (within both government and wider society) through the recent TBUC strategy. In this sense good relations is now at least symbolic of what holds the new state together. The interpretation and meaning of good relations has changed markedly over this period so it is useful to trace this evolution in depth.

Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

[23]. Even though the term good relations was not mentioned in the GFA, it was integrated into the Northern Ireland Act 1998 through which the British Government provided the legal context for the implementation of the agreement. Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 placed a key statutory equality duty on public authorities. This was the outworking of the British State commitments on equality that had been central to the GFA:

> *(1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity—(a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; (b) between men and women generally; (c) between persons with a disability and persons without; and (d) between persons with dependents and persons without.*

[24]. But Section 75 then went on to introduce a new and somewhat unexpected good relations duty:

> *(2) Without prejudice to its obligations under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.*

[25]. There are a number of important dimensions to this. First, the term appeared in law for the first time in Northern Ireland.[9] Second, it integrated 'anti-sectarianism' and 'anti-racism' for the first time. Third, the hierarchy between equality and good relations was firmly and clearly established – the legislation makes it clear that equality 'trumps' good relations in the sense that good relations must be promoted without prejudice to equality. In other words, it is explicit that equality must take precedence if there is a contradiction between equality and good relations.

A Shared Future 2005

[26]. When the state's 'Good Relations' strategy emerged in the OFMDFM (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) *A Shared Future* document in 2005 (issued under direct-rule), the importance of good relations had been fleshed out and foregrounded. This was now presented as a 'Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland'. There was some attempt to envision this approach:

> *The establishment over time of a normal, civic society, in which all individuals are considered as equals, where differences are resolved through dialogue in the public sphere, and where all people are treated impartially. A society where there is equity, respect for diversity and a recognition of our interdependence.*

[27]. The document also engaged with the Community Relations/Good Relations overlap:

> *There was criticism that the terms 'community relations' and 'good relations' were not properly defined. 'Community relations' refers specifically to division between the Protestant and Catholic communities in Northern Ireland. 'Good Relations' refers to Section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 which includes persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. (2005: 63)*

[28]. Importantly therefore the racism/sectarianism synthesis within good relations was complete.[10] The blueprint for an integrated 'Good Relations' response to both racism

[9] Shortly before the 1998 Act, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 was introduced and for the first time protected ethnic minorities from discrimination. Article 67 of the Order does place a statutory duty on local councils only, to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and 'good relations' between different 'racial groups'. This provision is rarely used.

[10] Although technically this emerged in a period of Direct Rule during a period of suspension of the devolved post-GFA institutions.

and sectarianism was in place. This has largely continued. This 'convergence' is important since it further undermines the case for the exceptionalism of sectarianism. Since racism and sectarianism are being addressed equally and together while other equality issues are being excluded, it further begs the question of whether there is any substantive difference between racism and sectarianism *at all*.

[29]. *A Shared Future* also addressed the relationship between equality and good relations directly:

> *Concern was expressed that the equality agenda would be suppressed to promote the good relations agenda. However, we regard equality of opportunity and good relations as complementary and believe that good relations cannot be based on inequality, between different communities or ethnic groups. To add emphasis to this point, the new policy and strategic framework has included as a fundamental principle: "***Progress towards a shared society must be built upon the significant progress that has been achieved in promoting equality of opportunity and human rights***." (Original emphasis)*

[30]. The document also acknowledged contradictions of this approach in terms of other equality constituencies. Many people were concerned that 'good relations' would not explicitly address homophobia or sexism within the paradigm. Nevertheless, the paradigm was located very specifically within the Section 75 categories – in this sense it was specifically about race and sectarianism and specially not about other forms of inequality or hate crime or violence:

> *This new good relations policy and strategic framework aims to address particular manifestations of community division between the Section 75 (2) categories – persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. This does not diminish the importance of other equality categories and this document represents just one facet of a multi-dimensional approach to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. (2005: 62)*

The TBUC strategy 2013

[31]. The most recent development in evolution of the good relations paradigm in Northern Ireland is the *Together: Building a United Community* (TBUC) Strategy, published in May 2013. This draft strategy, 'reflects the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society'. It bears emphasis that good relations is by this stage absolutely central to the presentation of policy – at least symbolically:

> *The Together: Building a United Community Strategy outlines a vision of "a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the*

desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance".

[32]. The document makes it clear that the strategy represents a 'major change in the way that good relations will be delivered across government'. A key action of the strategy will be the establishment of an independent and statutorily-based organisation to provide advice to government and to challenge all levels of government in terms of its performance in improving good relations:

The Equality Commission already fulfils a similar role in terms of monitoring public authorities against the statutory duties in Section 75 of the NI Act 1998. We will therefore establish an Equality and Good Relations Commission to change their roles and responsibilities to include good relations, this will incorporate the existing role and new good relations role. This will place significant functions currently under CRC on a statutory basis.

[33]. The document also confirms the difference between equality and good relations but insists that equality remains central to the strategy:

Therefore, in our decision making and policy implementation, we regard the promotion of equality of opportunity as an essential element in the building of good community relations and consider that good relations cannot and should not be built on a foundation of inequality.

[34]. Despite this, however, the concept appears as elusive as ever when definition is required:

In relation to the draft legislation to establish the Equality and Good Relations Commission we will seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism, based on this Strategy, to be included in that legislation.

[35]. A new Equality and Good Relations Commission is regarded as key to this process:

In order to achieve this we will amend the remit, roles and responsibilities of the existing Equality Commission and incorporate the following functions into an Equality and Good Relations Commission: Advice and challenge to Government; Research and evaluation on good relations issues; Scrutiny; Scrutiny of and challenge to District Council Good Relations Delivery Programme; and Regional advisory role to individuals and groups working on good relations issues.

[36]. TBUC also details the statutory duties of the Equality and Good Relations Commission which flow from these augmented functions:

> • To challenge and scrutinise Government in its progress towards meeting the commitments and aims of this Strategy;
>
> To scrutinise and provide advice on action plans arising from this Strategy;
> • To enforce and investigate as appropriate where there is a failure to comply with section 75(2);
> • To promote good relations across all sections of the community and support the development of best practice across the public service and the private sector;
> • To commission appropriate research in order to inform the implementation and delivery of this Strategy;
> • To carry out an assessment of progress against the objectives of this strategy and produce a report to the Assembly every two years;
> • To provide advice and scrutiny to the Ministerial Panel in the development of the District Council Good Relations Programme;
> • To challenge District Councils in respect of their performance against Good Relations Action Plans;
> • To submit an annual work plan to OFMDFM and report on progress against agreed targets;
> • To facilitate the sharing of best practice on a North-South, East-West, European and international level; and
> • To connect actions to promote good relations at a regional, sub-regional and localised level. (2013: 105-6)

[37]. Throughout this sweeping plan, however, there is a profound failure to address the question of just what this good relations work involves. Without a definition – and in the face of very different perceptions of what it *should* mean – this is a recipe for disaster. Moreover, the continued failure to 'go the final step' and identify sectarianism as a form of racism in line with the recommendations of the international bodies carries with it many contradictions. In integrating racial justice with sectarianism which remains undefined and good relations which remains undefined, the strategy threatens to do more harm than good.

[38]. These contradictions are at their most extreme when they overlap with issues that should be more central to criminal justice. Since 'hate crime' might be regarded as the quintessential example of 'bad relations', it is unclear why some equality constituencies should be addressed by good relations while others should not.[11] The

[11] This issue is raised throughout TBUC – particularly in terms of homophobia and the LBGT community. Thus TBUC acknowledges: 'Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have and do play a role in building good relations across our community. This was highlighted extensively throughout the public consultation when a number of individuals and representatives of lesbian, gay and bisexual groups, and transgender people, spoke of the need to apply good relations principles more widely across all s75 groupings (2013: 16-17).

TBUC document appears to collapse the difference between racism and sectarianism in Northern Ireland almost completely (OFMDFM 2014). Here the new paradigm of 'good relations' is used to integrate racism and sectarianism and separate them from other rights and equalities constituencies and issues. They become 'twin blights' to be addressed together. But, just as importantly, they are presented as something to be addressed separately from other forms of discrimination or hate. In direct contrast, the construction of 'hate crime' in Northern Ireland creates an unusual profusion of categories. The PSNI, approach leads to *three* separate sub-categories of hate crime connected to racism and sectarianism (and therefore, presumably, to good relations) – 'racist', 'sectarian' and 'religious'.[12] In all there are six hate crime categories recorded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) - sectarian, racist, homophobic, faith/religion, disability and transphobic. Yet only three of these is presented as directly negative in terms of good relations in the TBUC strategy. This contrasts starkly with the situation in the UK where the application of good relations 'extends to all equality strands, including social class' (Wigfield and Turner 2010: 9).

The relationship between 'good relations' and human rights, equality and anti-racism goals

[39]. There is an ongoing ontological tension in terms of discussions of what precisely good relations is about. This is one of the reasons that an acceptable definition is proving so elusive. At the heart of this is the tension between two contradictory formulations of good relations. First, there is the idea that good relations is really about human rights and equality and anti-racism – in other words it should be understood solely or primarily in terms of these goals. (Here the approach is best captured by the work on good relations of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in Great Britain – it is perhaps not surprising that an equality and human rights commission would define good relations in terms of equality and human rights.) At the other end of the spectrum is the notion that good relations is essentially separate from both human rights and equality. This is most highly developed in the work of Tom Hadden– which suggested that issues of 'sharing and separation' were both *different from* and *just as important as* issues of equality (Boyle and Hadden 1994; Hadden et al 1996). This approach acknowledged that sometimes one might take precedence over the other (CAJ 2013: 6-11).

[40]. This difference was in effect recognised in the Northern Ireland Act 1998, although it also made clear that equality obligations retained primacy over those of good relations. It has also been present in some of recent debates in which the notion of the 'equal importance' of equality and good relations was to the fore. Much of the time, however, this ontological difference is implicit in the positions that different

[12] PSNI 'Hate Crime' http://www.psni.police.uk/index/advice-and-legislation/advice_hate_crime.htm

actors take on good relations. And often is simply assumed that they cannot but be complementary. But there are obvious contradictions. For example, human rights and equality were – alongside security – presented as two of the three pillars of the Good Friday Agreement. Neither 'community relations' nor 'good relations' played any significant part in the agreement. Yet every Council across Northern Ireland has one or more centrally funded 'good relations' officers - there is no equivalent programme for equality or human rights officers[13].

[41]. The notion of good relations is equally complex and contradictory in terms of its relationship with racism and anti-racism. As we have seen community relations in Northern Ireland began as a paradigm that explicitly disavowed any connection with racism. From this perspective it was 'about' 'Protestant and Catholic communities' and sectarianism was defined as something other than racism. This has changed more recently as anti-racism has been grafted on – sometimes completely unthinkingly – to the existing community relations paradigm as it rebranded as good relations. Where this becomes particularly problematic is the point at which it begins to distort anti-racism in Northern Ireland (McVeigh and Rolston 2007). For example, it is not hyperbole to suggest that relations between white communities and BME communities are at an all-time low in Northern Ireland. It can be suggested that the BME communities have lived the peace process in reverse – surviving the worst of the conflict by being to an extent removed from unionist/nationalist tensions – yet seeing the ratcheting up of racist violence in the context of 'peace' as Northern Ireland becomes routinely characterised as the 'race hate capital of Europe'. As racist violence escalated across Northern Ireland through 2014, the PSNI finally publicly confirmed that the UVF is behind some of this violence.

We might expect that this would indicate pathologically 'bad relations' in anybody's book. Yet it has provoked little sense of crisis – and little action - across the state or politics or the contemporary 'good relations' infrastructure. Despite the rhetoric of TBUC, addressing increasing racist violence appears to be a job for someone else – it is not good relations work.

[42]. In this sense, good relations work continues to distort anti-racism in a profoundly problematic way. It is emblematic of this reality that within the OFMDFM 'racial equality' is situated within the *Good Relations and Building a United Community* 'theme' rather than the *Equality, Human Rights and Social Change* 'theme'.[14] It might be suggested that anti-racism is primarily about 'equality, human rights and

[13] Thus the outworking of policy often compounds the difference between equality and good relations objectives.

14 OFMDFM 'Equality and Strategy' http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy.htm. Arguably this should not be an either/or – anti—racism should straddle equality and good relations. But if it is to be either/or, race equality work should sit within an equality rather than a good relations paradigm.

social change' not about 'good relations' almost anywhere else in the world. But this is not simply about symbolism. Despite the frequent 'Northern Ireland is the race hate capital of Europe' warnings, BME communities have had to wait for over five years for a new Race equality strategy. In other words, in Northern Ireland at least, all the focus on good relations has proved to be singularly ineffective in driving any effective anti-racist strategy. And this is a society where the police are acknowledging that a terrorist group is leading a campaign of racist violence and 'ethnic cleansing' against migrants and people of colour.[15]

[43]. Meanwhile, in GB the trajectory has been somewhat different. Community relations there was always primarily about racism. As the good relations paradigm took over, other equality constituencies were grafted onto the core project of improving relations between different ethnic groups. In other words, while the good relations paradigm has extended to cover a whole range of other equality constituencies, its practice remains grounded in anti-racist work. Writing in 2009, Wigfield and Turner suggest:

> *the closest form of good relations that is currently in operation relates specifically to race under the Race Relations Act (1976) (as amended in 2000) under which public authorities have a general statutory duty to promote race equality. The duty has three distinct parts: to work to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and, crucially for the GRMF [Good Relations Measurement Framework],* ***to promote good race relations****. Johnson and Tatam (2009) rightly point to the importance of the guide for public authorities on promoting good race relations, which was produced by the CRE in 2005. The guide identified five key principles which were all necessary to achieve good race relations:* ***Equality*** *– equal rights and opportunities for everyone in all areas of activity.* ***Respect*** *– acceptance of the individual right to identify with, maintain and develop one's particular cultural heritage, and to explore other cultures.* ***Security*** *– a safe environment, free from racism, for all.* ***Unity*** *– acceptance of belonging to a wider community, and of shared values and responsibilities, rooted in common citizenship and humanity.* ***Cooperation*** *– interaction by individuals and groups to achieve common goals, resolve conflict and create community cohesion. All five of these principles are directly relevant to achieving good relations…. (2009:4-5)*

[44]. The tension between the situation in Northern Ireland and Great Britain is also marked in terms of the *focus* of good relations work. In England and Wales in particular, good relations has reference to the whole range of statutory equality constituencies *as well as class*. In contrast, in Northern Ireland, good relations has

[15] BBC News. 2014. UVF 'behind racist attacks in Belfast' 3 April 2014. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-26871331

been very firmly - if clumsily and arbitrarily - constructed as something that refers solely to sectarianism and racism. So the grounding in anti-racism of a broad good relations paradigm in Britain contrasts starkly with a much narrower good relations paradigm in Northern Ireland - which has palpably failed to intervene effectively in a situation of 'bad relations' characterised by racist violence.

[45]. Of course it may be argued that this is a consequence of poor practice rather than a bad paradigm. At present existing legislation accepts, at least implicitly, that there is no necessary correlation between equality and good relations – they are formulated as different, if related, things. There is nothing unusual in this – unless good relations were a direct function of equality, we might expect that the two are not always complementary.[16] In other words, despite the insistence of many good relations practitioners, there are situations in which the equality and community relations agendas maybe directly antagonistic. By the same token, we can suggest that there is no necessary correlation between good relations and human rights. But if this is the case, it becomes clear that legal protection from racism is likely to come primarily through equality and human rights measures, not through the good relations paradigm. In this context, it is important that good relations does not undermine human rights or equality protections in any way.

The definition of 'good relations' in law in Great Britain

[46]. There are specific reasons for looking at England and Wales and Scotland beyond the broad point that they are part, alongside Northern Ireland, of UK state reporting and implementation responsibilities on human rights and equality. First, there is the issue of overlap and synergy between definitions. When the term 'community relations' was defined in law in the 1968 Race Relations Act, the connection to race was explicit: *"community relations" means relations within the community between people of different colour, race or ethnic or national origins'*. When the term 'good relations' first appeared in legislation in the 1976 Race Relations Act it also remained unambiguously within the broad ambit of race equality. The CRE and others were given a statutory duty, 'to promote equality of opportunity, and good relations between persons of different racial groups generally'. But this specificity has changed over time. The UK reading of good relations is now a particularly permissive one. As Wigfield and Turner confirm:

> *Although the concept of good relations has, to some extent, emerged from the desire to achieve good race relations in Britain and as a way to challenge sectarianism and racism in Northern Ireland, it is important to emphasise that the GRMF extends to all*

[16] For example by analogy, we might suggest that bussing in the US had an important positive impact in terms of equality since it improved the quality of education of many African Americans. But the 'race' rioting that accompanied such bussing was almost definitively negative for 'community relations'.

> *equality strands, including social class. Indeed, the introduction of a good relations duty across the seven equality strands on all public authorities within the Equality Act 2010 augments the widening of good relations beyond race relations and religious belief. Good relations is thus intended to cover in a non-exclusive and non-normative way the interaction and coexistence of economically, culturally and socially diverse populations in the UK. (2010: 9)*

[47]. Second, there are issues of 'read across' between Britain and Northern Ireland - in terms of both good and bad practice. Scotland provides an additional comparator as a devolved administration managing the tensions between national and regional dynamics around good relations (Dobbie 2010; EHRC Scotland 2012). In the Scottish case, this has led to the contemplation of jettisoning the concept altogether:

> *The primary barrier to evidencing good relations is perhaps the issue of conceptualisation and language…. [T]he terminology of good relations is not well understood outside of the equality movement. To achieve recognition of good relations, or to further community cohesion work, we may need to consider dropping the phrase almost entirely from our lexicon, or accept that it has a limited compliance-centred application. (EHRC Scotland: 7)*

[48]. Either way, it is particularly important to pay close attention in Northern Ireland to good relations practice within the relatively progressive regime on race in Great Britain.[17] This is not, of course, a one-way process. Ironically, perhaps, much of the development of the good relations paradigm in England and Wales references the development in Northern Ireland (Johnson and Tatam 2009: 26-9). Thus, the EHRC review suggests: 'A lot of the initial work on defining good relations and the essential prerequisites necessary for good relations has been undertaken in Northern Ireland' (Wigfield and Turner 2010: 15).

[49]. From this departure, however, the paradigm that emerges in Great Britain looks significantly different. First, it is clearly located in anti-racist discourse. Second, it now references all equality constituencies. Third, it specifically references its relationship to human rights and equality. (For example, the Equality Act 2006 defines good relations very specifically in terms of 'respect' for human rights and equality. At this point, however, it is not clear what the added value of the label 'good relations' is. It is essentially suggesting that equality and human rights are positive in themselves – which most people would support – but adding little extra to the notion of good relations.) Finally, the term is defined in law. This is obviously significant since, as we have seen, there is little else to anchor the term to in terms of international discourse beyond the work that we have mentioned on interculturalism. It is also significant since it occurs within another jurisdiction of the UK. Legislation

[17] See, for example, Wigfield and Turner's review of the GRMF (2013). It seems obvious that this kind of analysis should be informing good relations practice in Northern Ireland.

does not have to be identical across the different devolved administrations, obviously, but it would seem ridiculous to offer a definition in law in Northern Ireland that was significantly removed from the existing legal definition for England and Wales and Scotland.

[50]. On this front there have been recent attempts in Great Britain to improve the robustness of the term (Johnson and Tatam 2009; Wigfield and Turner 2010). It has found more precise definition in recent equality legislation. For example, the Equality and Human Rights Commission was created by the Equality Act 2006 which provided it with a 'good relations' mandate to build:

> *...mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing of diversity, and on shared respect for equality and human rights.*

[51]. Section 10 of the 2006 Act defined the Commission's responsibilities in respect of promoting good relations, as to:

> (a) promote understanding of the importance of good relations:
> (i) between members of different groups, and
> (ii) between members of groups and others
> (b) encourage good practice in relation to relations:
> (i) between members of different groups, and
> (ii) between members of groups and others
> (c) work towards the elimination of prejudice against, hatred of, and hostility towards members of groups, and
> (d) work towards enabling members of groups to participate in society.

[52]. This broad approach to good relations was confirmed by the Public sector equality duty included in the 2010 Equality Act:

> (1)A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
>
> (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
>
> (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
>
> (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

[53]. This Act also offered a definition of good relations:

> *Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to— (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.*

[54]. It has been noted that this formulation also includes a subtle shift from 'promoting' to 'fostering' good relations (EHRC Scotland 2012: 4). If anything, however, this makes the approach even more lacking in conceptual rigour. Finally the Act made explicit the 'protected characteristics' – essentially the core equality constituencies to be addressed by good relations interventions:

> *The relevant protected characteristics are—age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.*

[55]. It bears emphasis that these protected characteristics are much wider than those in Northern Ireland. In addition, as Wigfield and Turner make clear:

> *Although socio-economic status/class was not listed as one of the equality strands, it is increasingly recognised that it needs to be taken into account and has implications for good relations. It is also being added to the other measurement frameworks. (2010: 3)*

[56]. Given the lack of clarity and agreement in Northern Ireland, adapting the statutory good relations duty on public bodies in GB definition in s149(5) of the Equality Act 2010 is the closest to being definitive: *good relations …means having regard, in particular, to the desirability of —(a) tackling prejudice, and (b) promoting understanding*.

[57]. Finally there are important lessons for Northern Ireland in the process of the EHRC generating a Good Relations Measurement Framework (GRMF) for Great Britain (Wigfield and Turner 2010). The GRMF aims to produce a set of indicators that collectively 'paint a comprehensive picture of the current state of good relations in Great Britain, for England, Scotland and Wales, and in individual localised areas'. The Commission's stated aims are that the GRMF will:

- contain indicators that paint a comprehensive picture of the current state of the nation in terms of good relations;
- have the confidence of the Commission and its major stakeholders, including the government, statisticians and academics; and
- be developed through a consultative process to support legitimacy. (Johnson and Tatam 2009: 1)

[58]. The EHRC report outlines the Good Relations Measurement Framework which comprises four key domains and associated indicators (Wigfield and Turner 2010). These indicators were arrived at through a complex methodological process involving a quantitative review, focus groups and stakeholder discussions.

The four domains selected to measure good relations are: *attitudes; personal security; interaction with others;* and *participation and influence*. The report also discusses the reasons for the selection of each domain and indicator, considers how well these can be measured by existing research and identifies gaps in the evidence.

[59]. Clearly the GRMF has vitally important lessons for Northern Ireland. We would expect the TBUC strategy to invite a similar degree of objective measurement and assessment. It bears emphasis, however, that this Framework for Great Britain is based upon the relatively tight definition of good relations contained in the 2010 Act. The farther the Northern Ireland definition of good relations from the Great Britain definition, the lesser the relevance of lessons from interventions like GRMF. The looser and woollier the definition used, the less easy it is to provide any measurement at all.

Recent debates on incorporating a definition in Northern Ireland

[60]. In the absence of any definition of good relations in law, there are a number of fairly vague, sometimes overlapping, sometimes contradictory definitions. Many of these are a survival of the old community relations paradigm with racism crudely tacked on – or ignored altogether. But there has been some new work in this area since 1998. For example, the Assembly Code of Conduct states*, "Members will act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by providing a positive example for the wider community to follow by acting justly and promoting a culture of respect for the law".*

[61]. Since the ECNI is supposed to take responsibility for this process in the TBUC proposals, its current views are particularly salient. The Equality Commission's 'working definition' of good relations as set out in its Good Relations Guide (2007) is:

> *The growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of the society but seek to promote respect, equity and trust and embrace diversity in all its forms.*

I have been critical of this type of definition in the past, in particular in its divergence from the post-GFA equalities framework (McVeigh and Rolston, 2007, page 15). What is most striking however is that the working definition diverges significantly from how the same paradigm is defined in the rest of the formal jurisdiction. This threatens to return Northern Ireland to a pre-1997 situation in which people find themselves in a substantially different, and markedly weaker, race equality regime.

[62]. The ECNI has also made interventions to encourage wider adoption of its broad framing of good relations:

> *We recognise that neither 'good relations' nor 'promoting good relations' is defined in legislation nor is there a commonly agreed definition. The Commission has however set out in its guidance for public authorities on guidance on promoting good relations its working definition of good relations in order to provide further clarity to public authorities:*

"the growth of relationships and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms."

[63]. In addition:

we are of the view that 'promoting good relations' is not primarily concerned with 'acting justly' or 'promoting a culture of respect for the law'. We also consider that the draft code does not fully capture good relations as a positive and dynamic concept. Instead we consider that good relations is concerned with proactive steps that embrace diversity and promote respect, equity and trust.[18]

[64]. There has also been recent discussion in the context of Assembly discussion at the Further Consideration Stage of the Local Government Bill.[19] At this point there appeared to be a desire for consensus on definition from both unionists and nationalists. In other words, at least the need for definition was recognised.

[65]. However, the ensuing discussions suggested that there was unlikely to be an immediate consensus on any definition. For example, Anna Lo spokesperson for the Alliance suggested:

We are not convinced that a definition is required, if no definition is required in the Northern Ireland Act and as there has already been 15 years' worth of good work with the legal framework that exists. More than that, I am deeply concerned that the amendment makes no reference to reconciliation, integration or sharing. Those must all be part of our approach to good relations, and we cannot leave them out. To do so would be to roll back valuable good relations work and would limit good relations work far too narrowly. A comprehensive definition is needed if one is to be applied at all. This definition is not good enough and could undermine work done so far.

[66]. This contrasts starkly with the position adopted by Colum Eastwood speaking in response for the SDLP:

[18] A CAJ briefing also argues that at times a 'literal and face value' definition of 'good relations' has been operationalised whereby the duty is engaged by actions the 'other side' takes umbrage with. CAJ states that "Such good relations discourse does not tend to make reference to grievances of the representatives of ethnic minorities, and hence in practice is about the competing views of the representatives of unionism and nationalism" and voices concerns the duty could simply become a political veto. The example given is the Equality Commission investigation into the naming by Newry council of a play park after IRA hunger striker Raymond McCreesh. The Investigation Report states that "the good relations duty is 'certainly engaged' in the context of both a complaint by the Orange Order to the Council and that there has been 'much public discussion in the context of good relations and a shared future'" (CAJ, 2014a).

[19] http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Reports-13-14/01-April-2014/

I would have loved to have read your definition of good relations, but you made no attempt to define it in the Bill. We did, and we did it on the basis of ensuring that objective need and equality will not be trumped by good relations or anything else. However, we stand by the principles of community relations and good relations, and we will not allow them to be used to veto policies on the basis of need and to stop equality becoming a central part of our society and this Government. People fought very hard to ensure that we have a rights-based approach in this society and that we can develop that. All the work around the Good Friday Agreement — not everybody in this room says they agree with it, but they are all here — was about ensuring a rights-based approach. That was because we have a history in this society of not having had that approach. People in this city and in the North of Ireland had to fight and march in a peaceful and democratic way even to be allowed to use their vote. I think that people very clearly understand why equality is an essential part of this.

[67]. Thus even two of the most committed supporters of the 'good relations' paradigm appear poles apart on the issue of definition. CAJ and others made interventions in this context (CAJ 2014). In the event the Minister put forward a clause which stated "the reference to improving the social well-being of the district includes promoting equality of opportunity in accordance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and, without prejudice to this, having regard to the desirability of promoting good relations;" which, as the Minister told the assembly was "framed to ensure that the type of existing safeguards between equality and good relations in section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 are maintained." All parties accepted this formulation which now stands as section 66(3) (a) of the Local Government Act 2014.

[68]. In this context, cross-party support for any new definition appears unlikely in the immediate future. As it stands consensus is reached only in the sense that political actors are forced back to the 1998 legislation which protects the primacy of equality but provides no definition of good relations.

[69]. There are a number of salient points here. First, the notion that a definition is not needed is ridiculous. The basic principle of clarity in law means that the increasing statutory prominence of good relations must take place in a context in which people are clear about what kind of behaviours are being made unlawful or inappropriate. The very fact that there is such a contradictory discussion confirms the need for definition. It seems impossible to have an intervention which is presents as having such relevance yet incapable of defining itself. This becomes ever more problematic as it is suggested that good relations assumes the enhanced status suggested in the TBUC strategy. If good relations cannot be defined in Northern Ireland, it would be better to jettison the term completely and accept that most of what it attempts to achieve is already implicit or explicit within equality and human rights work.

[70]. Second, as we have seen, there *is* already a simple, functioning definition in law in the UK. Although this definition did not attract sufficient cross-part support to be included in the Local Government Act, this remains the best option available. Unless there is unanimity across the Assembly, it seems inappropriate to generate a definition of good relations which is itself divisive. It would be ironic if the definition of good relations were itself to become a manifestation of 'bad relations'. In this context, the simplest and best solution is to adopt the definition already embedded in UK law – at least until some other 'appropriate consensus' is reached. In other words, in the absence of any other definition, adapting the statutory good relations duty on public bodies in GB definition in s149 of the Equality Act 2010 remains the best template: good relations …means having regard, in particular, to the desirability of — (a) tackling prejudice, and (b) promoting understanding.

[71]. Finally, this definition is useful because it emerged from a race equality paradigm. This should reinforce the reality that 'good relations' – as framed by the Northern Ireland Act – *should* be as responsive to bad relations between ethnic groups as bad relations between Protestants and Catholics. Yet ongoing racist violence played almost no role in recent debates. There are two ways to remedy this – either the good relations paradigm transforms its capacity to address the contemporary reality of racism in Northern Ireland or it absolves itself of this responsibility. In other words, if good relations cannot address the profound challenge of contemporary racism, the concept may have to be disarticulated again and represented as 'community relations' between Protestants and Catholics once more.[20]

[72]. But this raises its own contradictions since the notion that sectarianism is a form of racism is now recognised by the key international bodies. Moreover, as we have seen, the trajectory in Britain is completely in the opposite direction – good relations is becoming ever more permissive in its target interventions. Certainly the paradigm in Northern Ireland cannot have it both ways. Either good relations is solely about Protestant/Catholic relations and these are so exceptional that they require an entirely separate approach from anti-racism; or the paradigm must accept the discipline that comes from working on racism. If good relations in Northern Ireland continues to include anti-racism then the paradigm cannot be allowed to distort work on racism in the negative way that it has over recent years. In terms of the *sui generis* approach, there are plenty of arguments to suggest that this is not a sensible option. [21] It is much more practical for Government to continue to integrate approaches to anti-sectarianism with broader anti-racism as they have done over recent years. This is precisely the approach supported by CERD and CoE through

[20] For example, this could be achieved relatively easily legislatively by removing the 'or racial group' element from Section 75 (2) which would leave good relations in Northern Ireland in the more traditional domain of pre-GFA 'community relations'.

[21] These are discussed in more depth in the parallel Equality Coalition document 'Sectarianism: Towards a Definition in Law' referenced in footnote One.

their recognition of sectarianism as a form of racism. But this means that the core values of anti-racism – including those laid down in international law – have to obtain.

And this means that equality and human rights must remain central to racial justice. Other dynamics – like 'equity' or 'sharing' should not be allowed to dilute or undermine this project.

Conclusions

[73]. Good relations is about to enter a new phase in Northern Ireland through the outworking of the TBUC strategy. For good or ill, the paradigm is becoming a defining feature of consensual politics in the new Northern Ireland. Negatively it appears as the lowest common denominator in unionist/nationalist power sharing since almost everybody can subscribe to the broad goal of 'good relations'. It is, however, important not to be too dismissive of this reality – in a post-conflict situation all of the processes referenced by good relations – sharing, reconciling, understanding, integrating – present genuine challenges. In such circumstances a 'soft' approach to the causes of division may be the most obvious one available, especially if politics is being driven by the need to establish 'sufficient consensus'. This means that the good relations paradigm is unlikely to go away – in this context it is important that it is made to work as effectively as possible in support of the equality and human rights of all citizens of Northern Ireland. A key part of making it work is having a definition in law.

[74]. Alongside a functioning definition, it is important to pay closer attention to other jurisdictions which are addressing broader similar issues in different ways. In particular, the trajectory of good relations practice in England and Wales and Scotland is significant because it appears more and more dissimilar to that in Northern Ireland. In this context, it seems bizarre to further institutionalize a form of good relations in Northern Ireland that is increasingly divergent from the model in Great Britain. In the absence of international standards, the British good relations model provides the default standard. Any deviation from this – in terms of definition, scope or monitoring frameworks – should be justified in terms of something more substantive than political expediency or Northern Ireland exceptionalism. Beyond this there are lessons from the US and Australia and other countries that continue to make use of the community relations paradigm. It is also important to draw on the lessons from the interculturalism model which has more grounding in international law and practice and is much more current at EU level. In other words, a key corrective to Northern Ireland 'exceptionalism' is the recognition that most other societies are engaging with similar questions to those bundled around 'good relations'. Moreover, they are often addressing these in more innovative and more radical ways.

[75]. The community/good relations paradigm has always been positioned in an uneasy relationship with equality and human rights. There is no natural synergy between rights-based and community relations-based approaches and at times they may be directly antagonistic. Moreover, good relations has had a specific problem in addressing racism in Northern Ireland. While it has arguably subsumed race equality since 1998, it has been very poor at delivering anything approaching 'good relations' for Northern Ireland's BME population. Despite the affinity between race equality and good relations in Britain, in Northern Ireland good relations has singularly failed to acknowledge - let alone address - the commonly-held characterisation of Northern Ireland as the 'race hate capital of Europe'. In a context in which the police service themselves are identifying racist violence as being orchestrated by illegal paramilitary organisations and characterising this as 'ethnic cleansing', the good relations paradigm has failed to generate an appropriate response to racism.

There needs to be a more appropriate rights- and criminal justice-based response to racism in general and racist violence in particular. In this sense there was more integrity to the 'old' community relations approach in Northern Ireland– it did not pretend to have any competence in addressing racial equality or racist violence. This issue should be resolved in framing any definition of good relations in law.

[76]. Finally, the TBUC strategy threatens to make a rod for its own back in terms of the failure to define either sectarianism or good relations.[22] In terms of good relations in particular it appears nonsensical to further institutionalize and legalize a paradigm that cannot define itself and which has failed to situate itself in terms of international law and standards. But it also seems unlikely that the wished for 'appropriate consensus' on any new definition is going to be achieved, at least in the short-term. In absence of any existing or likely cross-community consensus on a definition for good relations in Northern Ireland, adapting the statutory good relations duty on public bodies in the GB definition is the most useful available: *good relations …means having regard, in particular, to the desirability of —(a) tackling prejudice, and (b) promoting understanding.* This definition should inform any further development of the good relations paradigm in Northern Ireland.

[22] The previous paper argued that the solution to this problem of definition with sectarianism is to start from the position of CERD and CoE and recognise that 'sectarianism is a form of racism'. With this approach the 'work' of defining falls on racism – which already has a well-established rights- and equality-based paradigm to draw on (McVeigh 2014).

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Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Equality Commission
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

EVIDENCE TO THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY FIRST MINISTER

INQUIRY INTO BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

OCTOBER 2014

1. Introduction and summary

1.1. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community. Further details on the scope of the Commission's remit, duties and expertise are contained in Annex 1.

1.2. The Commission welcomes the Committee's focus on informing the Executive's approach to tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance. It is critically important that the Executive works to secure improved relationships in Northern Ireland and to support continuing transition to a peaceful society. Addressing the issue of the relationships between people who live and work in Northern Ireland, and between their children who will shape our future, is one of the most pressing policy issues facing us[1].

1.3. The Commission's vision for Northern Ireland is as a shared, integrated and inclusive place, a society where difference is respected and valued, based on equality of opportunity and fairness for the entire community. We consider that all people must be valued equally and believe that everyone should be allowed the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

1.4. Both equality of opportunity and good relations are essential to creating a just and fair society. We recognise that equality and good relations are inter-dependent and inextricably linked. One cannot be effectively pursued without the other and neither will find its full expression in the absence of the other. It continues to be imperative to address key inequalities as well as focus attention on good relations.

[1] Response to the draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, ECNI, 2010

1.5. The Commission's submission sets out the importance of addressing inequalities and good relations; the value of a clear, coherent legal framework; the need for adherence to institutional frameworks and conventions; the need for a clear definition of good relations in statute; the significant role of communities in policy and decision making and the importance of good relations indicators to monitor and measure progress.

It also makes recommendations relating to leadership, expression of culture, display of flags, education, housing, dealing with the past, women and peace building and law reform.

1.6. The Commission would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters further should the Committee wish to invite the Commission to provide oral evidence during its Inquiry. The response covers those questions most relevant to the Commission's remit and experience and addresses the relevant points set out in the Terms of Reference in turn.

2. Perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations

Theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services

2.1. The Commission has a statutory remit in the area of good relations, derived from section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Race Relations Order 1997. The Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order also has relevance for good relations. Specifically, the Commission's remit provides that should:

- promote good relations between people of different racial groups[2];
- promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious beliefs and political opinions[3];
- provide advice to public authorities and others on, as well as keep under review the effectiveness of, the duties on public authorities to pay regard to the desirability of promoting good relations[4].

2.2. This legislative framework, and the effective application of anti-discrimination legislation and the statutory equality and good relations duties, has made a significant contribution to creating the circumstances for change in Northern Ireland. Lessons can be drawn from this in the context of addressing good relations going forward.

Good race relations

2.3. The Commission considers further action by Government to be imperative to enhance relations between people of different racial groups – noting this encompasses majority and minority racial groups. This is of direct relevance to

[2] Race Relations Order 1997
[3] Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998
[4] Northern Ireland Act 1998

securing better outcomes in the context of this Inquiry. Our recommendations[5] are that the Executive, Departments and other key stakeholders, amongst other areas, take action to:

- address current gaps in rights and protections through law reform;
- tackle prejudicial attitudes and racism;
- address concerns about treatment of children on the grounds of their race in schools, whether in experiences of bullying or reflection of cultures in the curriculum;
- address issues in the workplace such as harassment and action to counter negative behaviours, potential discrimination and barriers experienced.

2.4. The Commission is making these recommendations, and others, in response to OFMDFM's consultation on *A Sense of Belonging: Delivering Social Change through a Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014 – 2024.*

Shared space – the experience of the workplace

2.5. The anti-discrimination legislation provides both workplace protections and employer responsibilities[6]. The Commission's guidance on Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment directly addresses matters which could be raised as complaints within the context of the anti-discrimination legislation; and the work by employers towards fair participation through affirmative action agreements has had a positive impact on the balance of the workforce and integration in workplaces[7].

2.6. The fair employment legislation has helped to change behaviour in the workplace. As a result, we no longer see workplaces bedecked with emblems associated with either community and the emblems we do see tend to be of a more subtle nature. Employers and employees behaviour is regulated by equal opportunities and anti-harassment policies and procedures and it is fair to say that, in general, workplaces have become more integrated. Employers and employees are clearly aware of the behaviour expected of them, and in most cases act accordingly[8].

Developing policies and service planning: public authorities' duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations

2.7. Public authorities must have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations when they carry out their functions, such as when developing and delivering policies and services.

2.8. In the development of policies, the Commission recommends methodologies for public authorities to use that provide an evidence base that is available to inform decisions on a policy and implementation. Through this, the public authority can

[5] Racial Equality Policy - Priorities & Recommendations, ECNI 2014. http://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Equality-Themes/Racial-equality.aspx
[6] Fair Employment and Treatment Order 1998
[7] *Fair Employment in Northern Ireland – A Generation on*, Osborne & Shuttleworth (Editors), Blackstaff Press 2004
[8] Response to the draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, ECNI 2010

demonstrate how it has paid the required "regard" to the desirability of promoting good relations.

2.9. The Committee will be aware that this duty is set out in section 75 (2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and public authorities must also fulfil section 75 (1) which requires them to have "due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity". The Commission's guidance is clear about the difference between the levels of consideration they require respectively.

2.10. In terms of what "due regard" and "regard" mean, it is established that the consideration must be given in advance of a final decision being made, not afterwards, and it must be done with an open mind to achieve the goals set out in statute. Hence due regard and regard are not determinants of final policy outcomes but are the processes of providing the appropriate levels of consideration.

2.11. A public authority's equality scheme must set out its arrangements for assessing its compliance with section 75[9], and therefore the evidence of public authorities' practice of consideration of the desirability of promoting good relations when they are planning and delivering services is available through the reporting arrangements arising from these schemes[10].

2.12. Public authorities report annually on progress with their section 75 duties[11]. These reports present the relevant authority's projects, initiatives and policy processes, not only to give the appropriate consideration to the desirability of promoting good relations, (and appropriate consideration to the need to promote equality of opportunity), but they also tend to include information about how the public authority is achieving improved outcomes directly on the promotion of equality of opportunity, addressing inequalities and improving relations. This self-assessment framework provides examples of progress to implement the good relations duty and what is presented can vary widely between authorities.

Consideration of best practice in bringing divided communities together

2.13. In consideration of international practice, the Commission continues to prioritise engagement with relevant international frameworks and conventions[12]. The recommendations arising from the relevant committee, following an examination of a state party report, provide an expectation of national practice based on international standards. There are clearly a number of relevant conventions, for example the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, a multinational treaty directed to minority rights.

[9] Schedule 9 (4) (2) (a), Northern Ireland Act 1998
[10] Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities, ECNI 2010, Chapter 7
[11] Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – a Guide for Public Authorities, ECNI 2010, page 36
[12] The Commission has provided evidence to the UN Committees on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It also has a direct role outlined in Annex 1 in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

2.14. The Commission recommends that the Committee continues to support and encourage the Executive to fully participate in these reporting processes and ensure the circumstances of Northern Ireland are fully reflected in the UK state party reports. The Executive should also fully consider action in relation to the resultant recommendations from the relevant Committee[13]

2.15. The Committee will note that the Commission continues to make a full contribution to international events, projects and presentations of international best practice in bringing divided communities together[14]. This international engagement focuses on the advances made in the workplace in Northern Ireland, as addressing inequalities is fundamental for creating the conditions for peace.

3. What good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed

What good relations means

3.1. There is no current statutory definition of good relations. The Commission provided a definition in its guide to public authorities on promoting good relations; and the guide also included a number of other definitions in use by public authorities at the time[15].

3.2. There is a clear need for a definition of good relations in statute, to ensure clarity, and consistency of purpose in shaping actions and promoting good relations. The Commission considers a number of elements to be helpful in the formulation of a definition of good relations, to inform any legislation to establish powers and duties for an Equality and Good Relations Commission. This draws from what is already provided for in other statutes and is closely aligned to powers and duties originally given to the Equality and Human Rights Commission in Britain[16]. The Elements are:

- a high level of dignity, respect and mutual understanding;
- an absence of prejudice, hatred, hostility or harassment;
- a fair level of participation in society.

[13] The Commission has noted the following in relation to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Fourth report of the Committee of Experts in respect of the United Kingdom:
"12. Information about Irish and Ulster Scots in the fourth periodical report is still confined to those areas which remain the sole competence of the UK Government in London. Areas which have been devolved to Northern Ireland are not included. It was explained to the Committee of Experts that the responsibility for preparing these relevant parts of the report was that of the Northern Ireland power-sharing Executive. According to the authorities it was again not possible to agree within the Executive on the relevant text to be included in the report. The Committee of Experts regrets that the periodical report does not include important information relating to one Part III and one Part II language. It reminds the UK Government that it is its duty under the Charter to submit a complete report on time and expects that the forthcoming report will comply in full with Article 15 of the Charter ". January 2014

[14] For example, The Commission has hosted visiting delegations from countries such as Macedonia and Bahrain

[15] Promoting Good Relations – A Guide for Public Authorities, ECNI 2007.

[16] Equality Act 2006, section 10

3.3. The definition contained in the Equality Act 2010 which provides public authorities with direction on how they should fulfil their duty to have due regard to the need to foster good relations is also useful:

(a) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to —
(b) tackle prejudice, and
(c) promote understanding.[17]

3.4. The Commission held a discussion session with stakeholders in June 2014 in anticipation of draft legislation to establish an Equality and Good Relations Commission. In consideration of definitions, there was support for applying the definition as has been adopted in Britain from the Equality Act 2010.

3.5. The Commission notes, however, that the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy does not propose any new or additional responsibilities on any public authorities or other organisations, apart from what is proposed to augment the powers and duties of the Commission.

3.6. The Commission has also, in anticipation of the legislation, concluded that the intention signalled in the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy to provide a definition of sectarianism in the legislation needs to be considered in relation to what conduct or legally defined actions the definition will apply to.

3.7. The Commission welcomed the commitment in the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy to a framework for delivering good relations across a wide range of grounds, going beyond issues of sectarianism. The Commission also considered that a multi-faceted approach to promoting good relations is called for, given the complex society in which we live and given changing, dynamic sets of identities; in order to promote a better future for all[18].

3.8. The Commission also considers that its powers and duties on good relations, in statute, should apply to other grounds covered in the anti-discrimination legislation[19].

Removal of interface barriers

3.9. The Commission recommends the following to contribute to the development of programmes to remove interface barriers:

- greater regulation of displays of flags and emblems by private individuals or groups in public spaces, or on public property (see paragraph 4.4-4.5);
- effective engagement by public authorities with affected groups and communities when planning policies or services (see paragraphs 3.10-3.11);

[17] Equality Act 2010, section 149 (5)
[18] Response to the draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration, ECNI 2010
[19] Response To OFMDFM Consultation Paper, 'A Single Equality Bill For Northern Ireland', ECNI 2004

- mainstreaming consideration of both equality and good relations matters by public authorities throughout the development of options and delivery of policies (see paragraphs 2.7-2.12); and
- the direction of attention and action by public authorities in the framework of an appropriate definition of good relations (see paragraphs 3.2-3.3).

Role of communities in policy and decision making

3.10. The role of communities in policy and decision making is vital, including in respect of good relations work. Effective stakeholder engagement and consultation is an integral part of good policy making. Planning public service delivery must take the needs of everyone into account, and therefore engagement requires building confidence and cooperation, not only with and between stakeholders, but also their confidence in a process to ensure their contribution is respected, valued and taken into account. Effective engagement processes can result in communities having a greater ownership of decisions, alongside improving their capacity to ensure they are able to provide meaningful contributions.

3.11. The framework of an equality scheme provides for mainstreaming good relations considerations throughout the functions and policies of a public authority. Therefore when a public authority is considering the purpose of its policies, or developing new policies/services, it must consider whether the desirability of promoting good relations is relevant in that context. If it is, it must then be consulting with communities in relation to the duties, in advance of decision being taken. This will be to ensure that it has regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

3.12. The framework of the equality scheme has provided a significant focus on consultation practice over the past decade, with innovative approaches to consultation reported as a result from public authorities. The Commission has enhanced its advice over time as a result of the considerable learning and best practice in consultation[20], for example providing a significant contribution to the Northern Ireland Civil Service Good Practice Guidelines for Effective Stakeholder Engagement Guidelines, as launched in January 2014[21].

3.13. For example, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development undertook a consultation exercise on their draft 2020 Strategic Plan and its associated Equality Screening. It did so using a number of methods, including a teleconferencing forum to enable consultees to engage with the process from their homes or places of work[22].

3.14. In addition, in respect of the role of communities, the Commission recognises that adequate resources need to be made available to support good relations activities

[20] The Commission's Section 75 Guide for Public Authorities (2010) makes a number of recommendations for consultation practice for public authorities (pages 38-39) which have, in the main, been adopted by authorities in their Equality Scheme arrangements.
[21] Developed by the Policy Champions Network.
[22] Good Practice Guidelines, Effective Stakeholder Engagement, NICS 2013, page 24

at a local level. Completion of the Review of Good Relations Funding Delivery announced in *Together: Building a United Community* should be an urgent priority for OFMDFM.

Good relations indicators in monitoring and measuring progress of government interventions

3.15. It is clear that to ensure a purposive approach to implementing the *Together: Building a United Community Strategy*, a measurement framework is required. In the Commission's response to the OFMDFM consultation on the Good Relations Indicators, we welcomed the production of indicators associated to the strategy and recognized the challenge of this. The following general comments were made:

- that the proposed indicators should not be seen or referred to as (a comprehensive set of) indicators of 'good relations', given the noted plans to develop additional indicators under other strategies (for example: race, sexual orientation etc).

- that the commitment in the 'United Community' Strategy to take good relations considerations forward via a range of strategies suggests a scale of work that offers the potential for developing wholly new indicators where appropriate.

- that the indicators developed in support of 'United Community', while necessarily focussed on 'community' background, should also be capable of extension to the full range of anti-discrimination grounds.

- that there are merits in considering good relations indicators along two broad spectrums – noting the benefits in considering:

  - *a continuum of indicators from attitudes to behaviours where 'attitudes' can be considered as 'lead' indicators (outcomes) for subsequent positive or negative 'behaviours' (impacts)*
  - *indicators which span aspects of 'good relations' to be achieved, as well as aspects of 'bad relations' to be overcome*[23].

3.16. At the Commission's event in June 2014 in anticipation of draft legislation from the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy, it was noted that progress should be measured over a long period of time, with participants noting that changes in society are seen over a much longer period of time than the timescales for most government policy documents. Participants also noted the difference in relation to measurements of the delivery of the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy specifically, which relates mainly to specific actions[24]

[23] Response from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to the Consultation by the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister on Good Relations Indicator Review 2013/ 2014, ECNI March 2014

[24] http://www.equalityni.org/Delivering-Equality/Addressing-inequality/Social-attitudes-good-relations/Policy-responses/Together-Building-a-United-Community.aspx

4. Recommendations to support and enhance policy and decision making

4.1. The Commission welcomed the publication of the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy in May 2013, and its presentation of a range of agreed actions for implementation. The Commission also notes that the implementation currently is focused on the seven Headline Actions. In this context the Commission proposes that the Committee considers the following recommendations which reach beyond those headline actions, to support and enhance policy and decision making.

Importance of leadership

4.2. The Commission considers that leadership is critical in order to secure success both in delivery by institutions and in improved outcomes for our society. Clear leadership which identifies the direction and sets the tone is critical to the successful implementation of any good relations strategy. Leaders of public authorities need to demonstrate publicly in an unequivocal manner that promoting good relations is both central to and a measure of their success. All parties must show a willingness to compromise and move forward in a spirit of partnership, mutual support and respect. The Commission recommends that the Committee considers the importance of leadership at all levels in society, particularly from the Executive and elected representatives, in making any recommendations arising from this Inquiry.

Expressions of culture

4.3. The Commission recognises that we live in a society where, for some, the expression of one's culture is in many ways interpreted as a statement not of inclusion, but of exclusion for the other: a threat and something to fear. This clearly needs to be addressed and the Commission recommends that ways are found to encourage people to celebrate the positive aspects of their culture, focusing on being welcoming and inclusive so that no member of society is made to feel alienated.

Display of flags

4.4. The Commission has recommended the greater regulation of the display of flags, both in respect of Local Government reform and in its submission to the Panel of Parties in 2013, as follows:

The greater regulation of the display of flags. Regulation, and enforcement if appropriate, should aim to ensure that displays of flags and emblems promote mutual respect among the communities, while not allowing the display of emblems to be used to maintain, heighten or reignite sectarian tensions. While such regulations would differ depending on the various scenarios in which flags are

displayed, the principles for regulation should be consistent and based on a strong equality and human rights framework.[25]

4.5. Based on the evidence arising from practice by public sector organisations, the Commission made further recommendations to the Panel of Parties in relation to the display of flags and emblems by private individuals or groups in public spaces or on public property:

The Commission endorses the commitments in the Together: Building a United Community Strategy around building a culture where everyone feels safe and creating a community where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.

In making these commitments a reality and to facilitate expressions of identity in a sensitive way and in a way that will not be divisive, the Commission recommends:

- *Where the flags/emblems are associated with illegal organisations, they should be removed by the PSNI and enforcement action taken, if appropriate.*
- *A regulatory framework should be considered which clarifies the types of flags and emblems which could be displayed, the duration for such displays, the process for applications to display the flags/emblems and the sanctions if these processes are not adhered to. The types of flags that would be covered would be those used for civic occasions or celebration and the duration would allow the event to be properly marked in the community, but not so long as to allow the flags/emblems to mark out communities.*
- *Within the context of a regulatory framework, the Joint Protocol in relation to Flags Flown in Public Areas (2005) should be reviewed to create a forum for local authorities to engage with each other and with local communities to control the display of flags and emblems. The engagement would be enhanced, as clarity around appropriate displays as well as authority for their removal would be clarified. It is also noted that public authorities which have a potential role in engaging on these issues as part of the Protocol will have changed since that originally envisaged, for example with the newly created local councils (2015) and Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.*

In terms of private property, it is recommended that consideration is given to the extent to which displays of flags and emblems are increasing community tensions and discouraging the two communities from sharing public spaces and whether this is an area for action also. Such considerations should be balanced against individual rights as well as the need to prioritise the development and maintenance of shared spaces.[26]

Education

4.6. A system of shared education has a central role to play in advancing a shared society. A system of sharing should be across the full range of providers and

[25] Submission to the Panel of Parties, ECNI October 2013
[26] Submission to the Panel of Parties, ECNI October 2013

provision; one which routinely teaches students together via a shared curriculum in shared classes. The Commission specifically recommends:

- a system of sharing which routinely teaches students together via a shared curriculum in shared classrooms could better provide children with shared awareness, understanding and experience of the value and range of diverse cultures, identities and backgrounds in Northern Ireland;
- in furtherance of the aims of the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy, there is potential to enhance existing mechanisms (such as the Entitlement Framework and the Common Funding Formula) using lessons learnt to date, while providing appropriate mechanisms to incentivise and advance partnership working and shared delivery.
- that promoting equality and good relations within a school should complement school ethos and reinforce the importance of promoting equality and good relations in education.
- address concerns about treatment of children on the grounds of their race in schools, whether in experiences of bullying or reflection of cultures in the curriculum.

Housing

4.7. Despite the expressed views of people in Northern Ireland[27], people are often still living in largely religiously/politically homogenous areas[28]. We recognise[29] that people need to feel safe where they live and consider that if society is to be transformed, bold steps need to be taken to integrate communities. We recall the recognition within the Belfast Agreement of the role of mixed housing in facilitating reconciliation[30] and also the recognition of the importance of enabling people to exercise choice in the type of community in which they wish to reside. We have expressed our view[31] that segregated housing in Northern Ireland is not the way forward for our society and that we view socially, ethnically, politically and religiously integrated housing as the preferred option and long term goal.[32] That said, we consider that any actions must meet objectively assessed housing need, having due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

4.8. The Commission specifically recommends:

- current policy development in social housing provision should reflect the goal that segregated housing in Northern Ireland is not the way forward for our society. The Commission views socially, ethnically, politically and religiously integrated housing as the preferred option and long term goal, and

[27] ARK (2006) *Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2006: This indicated that 79% of people wished to live in 'mixed' areas*.

[28] 70% of social housing tenants live in communities that are at least 90% Roman Catholic or Protestant - Shuttleworth, I.; Lloyd, C.; (2006) Are Northern Ireland's Two Communities Dividing?: Evidence from the Census of Population 1971-2001, Shared Space, Northern Ireland Community Relations Council.

[29] Response to the draft Cohesion Sharing and Integration strategy, ECNI 2010

[30] The Belfast Agreement, reached in the multi-party negotiations (10 April 1998) - see Section 6

[31] Facing the Future DSD 2012

[32] ECNI Response to Facing The Future 2012 See Executive Summary p3

- the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy should set the framework for equality and good relations work at neighbourhood level.

The legacy of the past

4.9. The Commission recognises that addressing the legacy of the past is a multi-faceted issue and there are many factors to consider. In giving consideration to this, the Commission recommends that the focus be:

- to tackle sectarianism, prejudice and hate, and the persistent and systemic separateness and lack of interconnection between the two main traditions in Northern Ireland;
- to involve and engage everyone in the process, not just those who, in the past, have suffered directly or inflicted that suffering;
- to ensure the process of reconciliation is based on equality and human rights principles; and
- to make the elimination of inequalities an essential element in post-conflict programmes[33].

Women and peace building

4.10. In the creation of new structures, women's roles in leadership and decision making must be encouraged, ensuring the participation of women in the post conflict process. The Committee should consider the opportunity of forthcoming elections to further encourage and ensure women's participation in public life positions.

4.11. Any of the Committee's recommendations on the structures and delivery mechanisms set out in the *Together: Building a United Community* strategy should reflect the need to provide opportunities for and encourage women's roles in leadership and decision making.

General recommendations

4.12. The Commission would also like the Committee to consider making recommendations to the Executive for public policy reforms which:

- address current gaps in rights and protections through law reform;
- tackle prejudicial attitudes, racism and sectarianism;
- address issues in the workplace such as harassment and action to counter negative behaviours, potential discrimination and barriers experienced.
- challenge the systemic separateness and lack of interconnection between the two main traditions, our children and young people should grow up learning how to live, play and work together in a diverse society.
- ensure inclusion underpins the ongoing and future delivery of public services which contribute to a shared and united future, through partnership, sharing and the further development of individual and community abilities.

[33] Submission to the Panel of Parties, ECNI 2013, paragraph 25.

Annex 1: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

1. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (the Commission) is an independent public body established under the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission is responsible for implementing the legislation on fair employment, sex discrimination and equal pay, race relations, sexual orientation, disability and age.

2. The Commission's remit also includes overseeing the statutory duties on the Department to promote equality of opportunity and good relations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Section 75) and to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

3. The Commission's general duties include:

    - working towards the elimination of discrimination;
    - promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging good practice;
    - promoting positive / affirmative action
    - promoting good relations between people of different racial groups;
    - overseeing the implementation and effectiveness of the statutory duty on relevant the Department;
    - keeping the legislation under review.

4. The Equality Commission, together with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, has been designated under the United Nations Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) as the independent mechanism tasked with promoting, protecting and monitoring implementation of the Convention in Northern Ireland.

Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland

Together building a united Community

A response from the Evangelical alliance.

It is often said that the Church has failed to show leadership or provide vision in the public square. And so we begin with our vision. It is not definitive or exhaustive but rather descriptive of the flourishing society we are working to co-create. We build on the work of *Seeking Peace and Prosperity* - our response to the PFG 2011-2015 and *Past/Future/Now* – our response to the Haass Talks. We offer a hopeful vision centred on relationships, identity and purpose. We seek the wellbeing of this place and its people.

Our vision - One United Community

We see a flourishing Northern Ireland, a place that is truly at peace. It is built on strong relationships within our community. One community shaped by generosity, hospitality and risk. We dare to see Northern Ireland as a world-leader, a place where broken things are given the opportunity to be made whole and where relationships grow healthier, stronger and deeper.

/ *We see **one** community.*

/ *One community **united** around their desire for peace, wellbeing and whole-life prosperity.*

/ *One community in which all the broken and dislocated pieces get properly fixed and fit together in **vibrant** harmonies.*

/ *One community bound by a shared history but more so by a determination for a better future. The community is Catholic, Protestant, believers of all faiths and none, Unionist, Nationalist, Loyalist and Republican, those of all political beliefs and none. **Everyone** is respected as an image-bearer of God whether they believe in Him or not. Everyone has a voice, a vote and a part to play.*

/ *One community where all **leaders** lead by example. Leaders in this one community treat everyone with dignity, respect and kindness.*

/ *We see one community brave enough to respect **difference**.*

/ *One community with many differences and disagreements, like any other. But this community thrives on their **agreement** to disagree well - robustly, sensitively, and maturely.*

/ *One community marked by respect for their collective cultures, identities and political aspirations. The principle of democratic self-determination is accepted as the umbrella under which opposing loyalties are accommodated.*

/ *We see a community more concerned with its **character** than its ultimate constitution.*

/ *One community marked by **forgiveness**. Where all who seek it are given another chance.*

/ *One just community. Where justice is restorative and mercy is outrageous. For in one community an injustice against one is an injustice against all.*

/ *One community which views **hurt**, not as a weapon or an excuse for hate, but as common ground on which to empathise with the other. Where the weak show us strength- where victims and survivors inspire us to show grace.*[1]

/ *One **gracious** and humble community.*

/ *One community which is seasoned in giving the gifts of **generosity** and unconditional love; taking the first step, in going the extra mile, being the unlikely good Samaritan and in turning the other cheek.*

/ *One community that appreciates the cost of **peace**. Peace is not held lightly or cheaply. We see a community willing to move forward together away from lines drawn in the sand by previous generations. A community committed to creating a post-sectarian culture.*

/ *One community who **collaborate**.*

/ *One community who work together in health, politics, business, education and charity. Sides are put aside. There is a vibrant public square in which there is room for all. We see one community able to hold the tensions of **equity** and diversity. Where everyone is equal but accorded the respect of difference. Rights are vital but they flourish in the context of responsibility and relationship. Sectarianism, racism, homophobia, intolerance of religion and poverty are fought together.*

[1]Victimhood and attitudes towards dealing with the legacy of the past. Brewer, J & Hayes, B. 2014.

/ *One community built on **relationships**. Family, community, institutionally - relationships are prioritised. The importance of good relationships is recognised at home, in school and the workplace.*

/ *One community where the **Church** humbly lives out a radical love of our neighbour and our enemy.*

/ *One community that **welcomes** the 'other'.*

/ *One community in which there are no no-go areas. A community which **shares** space, housing, education and infrastructure. A community without 'peace walls' of concrete, heart and mind.*

/ *One community where everyone can share **education**. Where the role of parents, Church and state are respected. Shared spaces where children learn and grow up together.*

/ *One community that **celebrates** culture.*

/ *One community which **respects** each other's flags and symbols. One community where flags can be raised and lowered for a day in celebration or remembrance not left on lamp-posts as territorial markings.*

/ *One community in which **parading** plays a positive role in our future, with **the loyal orders** moving from a focus on cultural preservation to the creation of new traditions for everyone based on the principles of 'The Glorious Revolution' – civil and religious freedom and democracy for all.*

/ *One community with a **culture** of peace, unity and prosperity. Culture therefore that can be celebrated – for example in an annual joint peace parade.*

/ *One community respectful of their forefathers but not trapped by the guilt of betraying them. A community more concerned about becoming **forebears** to new generations to come. We seek to create new culture to be celebrated in years to come, to be cultural architects and cultural pioneers instead of cultural curators.*

This is our vision for this place; one hopeful future-facing community. One community requires belief in a peaceful, prosperous and united future. A future where everybody counts and everybody has a role to play.

Identity

Symbols of identity are obvious and everywhere in Northern Ireland, including flags, parades and language but it is also much more subtle than that. It's in the newspapers we read, the sports we follow, the names we carry, even the way we refer to this place. Our identity is so bound up in everything that it would almost be easier in this part of the world if we could just be born again. For Jesus-followers, identity is no longer primarily defined by nationality, social status, politics, ethnicity or even what we've done in the past. Our identity is found in relationship with God and those around us. Constitutional loyalties are still legitimate but they form a secondary part of our identity.

We challenge a culture where identity is too often reduced to national allegiances. We find our identity and purpose in so many other things: faith, family, community and work. Coincidently these identity-affirmers are in short supply in some of the most disadvantaged areas where sectarianism and par militarism thrives.

Statistics from the Long View Community Survey published in December 2013 show that with changing political circumstances comes a change in people's perceptions of their national identities with the most marked increase in 'Northern Irish' identification.

- Is there space to be developed for better political relations, continued peace and stability to help foster a more mutual view of national identity?
- We need long term vision from Government, civic society and Church to improve wellbeing, rebuild relationships and support healthy families and communities. Constitutional loyalties remain under the umbrella of democratic self-determination. However, there is a collective work to be done of re-orientating personal and community identity around shared things like family, civil and religious freedoms over and above contentious symbols.

Relationships

This is perhaps an appropriate place to insert a reference to the parable of the Good Samaritan – A man who belonged to the enemy community yet acted as a neighbour in a polarised society. It was in the encounter that things changed, one man reached across in loving action, transforming him from stranger to neighbour at the point of need. There is no hope for change or transformation of hearts and minds if people do not experience a meaningful encounter with the other.

Transforming society is about getting relationships right. We must understand the value of relationships in our society, articulate a vision for right relationships and create an environment in which these new relationships can flourish. We acknowledge as stated above the strides made in good relations due to shared space initiatives. However, doing life together is more valuable than the spaces and services themselves. Good relationships are vital to building a harmonious community. Relationships are a central part of our community, cultivated at a personal level and the responsibility of all members of our community.

Good community relationships are vital to a balanced and healthy life, physical and mental health. Northern Ireland has 20-25% higher rates of mental health issues than the rest of the UK[2]. The mental health foundation published "The Lonely Society" in 2010, which states that 48% of us think that we are becoming lonelier and 42% of us have suffered from depression because of loneliness[3]. Can we unite to counteract this dangerous move towards an individualism that isolates and destroys both 'sides' of our community? A society that focuses on real community, family and relationships will prosper socially, economically and politically. Church has a part to play in this. The Church has historically sought to be and continues to be a presence in society which cultivates community. Church is about life, hope, relationship with God and others and seeks the peace and prosperity of the place in which God has placed them.

Moving on to more fractured relationships, parades and protests must be approached from a place of relationship, community respect, responsibility and well-being. We call for an end to the dangerous desire on each 'side' to dominate this land and its people. We call for an end to internal games, party pride and politicking, which has damaged relationships and trust. We call for humility on the part of all involved. If we want to see basic civility, good relations and respect on our streets we need to see it modeled in public leadership. We graciously encourage government, civil and church leaders, to lead by example in their relationships.

[2] http://www.chex.org.uk/media/resources/mental_health/Mental%20Health%20Promotion%20-%20Building%20an%20Economic%20Case.pdf

[3] http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/content/assets/PDF/publications/the_lonely_society_report.pdf.

- We graciously suggest that MLAs design and sign up to a Good Relationships Commitment. This is not a legal document but a spirited agreement to treat each other with dignity and respect. In politics it's natural and healthy for people and parties to robustly disagree. This is not a naive call for niceness; it's about agreeing to disagree well, to improve the level of political discourse for the wellbeing of all in our society. It is a challenge to each politician to move beyond legal codes of conduct into real relationship and a very practical example of cohesion, sharing and integration. It's about leading by example. We do not seek to dictate the terms of the commitment from the outside but we suggest that these terms must be above partisan politics. For instance, agreeing to refrain from personal attacks, raising issues in private before going public. Could this be an opportunity for Northern Ireland to reframe everyday political discourse more constructively?
- Changing simple terminology from good relations to good relationships instantly brings the term to life, changing it from the general to the personal.
- We suggest that all new policies be "relationship-proofed" for their potential impact on family and community relationships. Policy proofing is an effective tool which is already in existence here in the form of rural proofing, having been used since 2002. In Northern Ireland four out of ten people live in a rural community, yet ten out of ten people are affected by the quality of their relationships. Northern Ireland could become a world leader in terms of innovative policy development which not only grows the economy but improves the quality of our daily life, wellbeing and relationships.

Victims

How we treat 'victims', those affected by the troubles/conflict, is vital to how we deal with division and good relations. Trying to build a united community without addressing 'victims' and the past is like trying to treat cancer with a sticking plaster. There is deep and painful work to be done to allow for new relationships and healing.

This issue sits right in the difficult area between truth, justice and mercy. Ultimately we need heart change over and above legal process. This is evidenced by the fact that whilst there is a legal definition of a victim, it is not universally accepted. There is then a danger that a hierarchy of victims develops and that those at the top have veto over how the past is dealt with. However if this is true, it must also be acknowledged that many of those most affected by the Troubles are most inclined to forgive.[4] Sir Kenneth Bloomfield (1998) made

4 A practical earthing of the potential of victims as 'moral beacons' can be seen in recent research by Professors John Brewer and Bernie Hayes. 'In two pieces of research undertaken as part of the Leverhulme programme, John Brewer and Bernie Hayes report results that show that victims in Northern Ireland can be moral beacons pointing toward a progressive and shared future. The first has yet to be published but forms part of the working paper recently loaded to the Publications Section of the Compromise after conflict website. It conclusively shows that victims are less punitive toward ex-combatants than non-victims with respect to four popularly canvassed policies. The second piece of research has just appeared in the current issue of the journal *Political Studies* (volume 61, issue 2, 2013: 442-61), and uses data from the 2010 Northern Ireland Election Survey, which Bernie Hayes was involved with separately. It shows that individual victims - those who had directly and indirectly experienced violent incidences and perceived themselves as victims - were significantly

the case for a more universal approach to victimhood in Northern Ireland by finding "some substance in the argument that no-one living in Northern Ireland through this most unhappy period will have escaped some degree of damage". Everyone has suffered because of the conflict in Northern Ireland, including those born since the Agreement. No single group of victims should have a veto over the process.

We commend the establishment of a Victims and Survivors Service on 2 April 2012, we suggest that a change of terminology altogether would be beneficial. However, while in no way seeking to diminish or undermine the hurt caused, we challenge the language of victimhood. The 'victim' label diminishes the hope of healing by keeping people tied to past traumas and shaping their identities around acts committed against them. Reducing a person to a 'victim' at some level robs people of their human dignity.

- We suggest a mechanism which offers tailored care and support to allow individual 'victims' to move beyond victimhood and the vetoes placed on them by politics and other 'victims'.
- We suggest more hopeful language which emphasises human dignity above any violent acts committed.

Shared Space

In this vision of a united place, space which is shared by the public is very important. Perhaps a sensible starting point would be using the long established principles of private and public property. It is largely people's own business what they do with their own private property. This is obviously subject to laws on displaying items associated with paramilitaries, other illegal organisations or offensive items. However, publicly-owned streets and their architecture such as lamp-posts, kerbstones etc. should be kept free of flags and symbols erected by private individuals or organisations. It is not the appropriate space to fly flags or paint national colours on these objects.

Roads and publically owned housing should not be referred to as 'Unionist' or 'Nationalist', 'Loyalist' or 'Republican'. There is no such thing as a Loyalist Road or a nationalist street, these are publicly owned spaces. This is not to negate or minimise the feelings of the Protestant or Nationalist residents living in particular areas, it is simply to make the important linguistic distinction between residents who are people and publicly owned concrete and tarmac.

more supportive of power sharing arrangements under the Good Friday Agreement than non-victims. This held true regardless of whether Protestants or Catholic victims are considered.' – *Compromise after conflict*

As

It is important then, that spaces are created to allow for transformative encounters like we saw in the parable of the Good Samaritan. While we very much welcome shared places like sports facilities and housing as outlined in the TBUC programme, this is not enough. There is a real need for structured and informal conversations that encourage the development of these radical relationships.

- People are free to display what they wish on their own private property. As long as it is not illegal or criminally offensive. However, publicly-owned streets and their architecture such as lamp-posts, kerbstones etc. should be kept free of flags and symbols erected by private individuals or organisations.
- The Executive parties should agree as a matter of urgency a consistent protocol on flying flags from public buildings and estate.
- **It must be very clear which body the public should contact when they have a complaint over an illegally erected flag, symbol, mural etc.**
- Language used to describe this public space needs to be fitting. Although subtle, it is not appropriate to describes residential areas as 'Nationalist' or 'Loyalist'. There needs to be a distinction between people and places eg. 'In an area where the population is largely nationalist.'
- **The move needs to be to shared bricks and sports pitches yes, but more so to shared hearts and minds.** Moreover, it is important that government policy encourages this transformational space approach when dealing with all aspects of education, housing, planning, interfaces and cultural expression etc.

Education

We commend the plans to establish 10 new shared education facilities and new schools on the Lisanelly Shared Education Campus model. However, the long-term community relations surveys spanning from 1989-2012 showed that over half of Northern Irish School children attend schools with 95% of the same religion or more (www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/voices.pdf). Notably, there has been a considerable shift away from the terminology of 'integrated schooling' to 'shared education' which raises questions as to whether this will require as much engagement or interaction between the two communities? We challenge any sort of drift from a commitment to furthering this cause. Part 2.1 of the TBUC programme states that 'Research indicates that prejudicial attitudes and behaviours can manifest early in childhood', emphasising the importance of children from different communities engaging at an early age.'

- While the specific politics and policies of education will vary and we as an organisation do not hold to a specific model, it is abundantly clear that children must socialise together as early as possible to transform relationships in this society.
- It could be profoundly beneficial for young people in our schools to have a compulsory education about our history and culture. This would not simply be taught as history but part of personal development and present day culture – Why there are parades, bands, why there are protests? What the troubles were all about and hearing different perspectives. This 'curriculum' could be facilitated and delivered by any number of credible NGO's.

Housing

'It is in the Shelter of each other that we live.' Irish Proverb

In terms of housing, we want to move beyond co-existence to co-habituation. We commend the vision to implement a neighbourhood housing scheme which would create 10 new mixed housing estates.

The Church has been active in developing mutual spaces in the community. For instance the Dock Café, established in the Titanic quarter of Belfast as a neutral/mutual space for meeting and engagement to promote the united community aspect of that area. It uses a boat known as the Nomadic to hold services, to try to bring some church unity to an area of Belfast that was being given a new start –one united community. A further example of the church's regeneration t is the celebrated Skainos project run by the East Belfast Mission. It is inclusive of the whole community, a place where people can gather, eat meals together, worship, and find help for health, employment, education, childcare, housing, and spiritual concerns. This sort of re-creation and regeneration is the perfect place for the church to put into action its call to be an agent of transformation in society.

'It's about integrating care and developmental support for children, families, young people, people who are homeless or unemployed, and the elderly. And it's about providing shared space for people from all backgrounds and communities in East Belfast.' (The Skainos project, East Belfast Mission, http://www.ebm.org.uk/skainos/)

•We believe the church should offer encouragement for such initiatives and could provide support by offering space and/or mediation for dialogue and inter-community development in whatever forms are relevant to their particular cultural context.

• Churches close to the new neighbourhood housing schemes could collaborate to create a space of welcome and community for those moving into the area. It is critical that good relationships are formed to overcome the inevitable tensions that will arise between mixed groups who will be living together.

Interfaces

The ironically named 'Peace Lines' simply make the dividing walls in people's hearts and attitudes more obvious. A society which is physically and visibly divided stands little chance of building harmonious relationships. We hope for, and work towards, the removal of such barriers. We welcome the Northern Ireland executive's commitment to remove all Peace Walls by mutual consent by 2023. Fruits of this are already visible with the opening of the gates in areas such as Alexandra Park Avenue.

- We learn to celebrate the removal of each interface removed as true progress.
- Before each peace Wall is removed there is a programme of Community engagement adressing the deeper issues of hurt, fear, identity and relationship.

Change and Grace

Beyond the removal of physical walls, we need to address the walls in peoples' hearts and minds. A duty of the Church is to speak life and love into society with its message of restoration, renewal and redemption to the hopeless and hurting through Jesus (the Gospel). Both Protestants and Catholics share a Christian heritage and understanding of the importance of forgiveness, grace and repentance in the context of relationships. These virtues are central to the Christian faith and the restoration of broken relationships. This process requires:

- **Repentance:** An acknowledgement of wrong, remorse and turning away from wrong/sinful/harmful actions, mind-sets and attitudes, to change direction and seek change for the better.

- **Forgiveness:** To grant free pardon, to give up all claim on account of an offence or debt. A choice to let go of hurt and wrong caused. In this context it is not giving up the pursuit of truth and justice or betraying loved ones but accepting the reality that in this life the truth does not always come out and justice is not always served.

- **Grace:** Unmerited favour, giving and getting what is undeserved, not always seeking a pound of flesh, not dragging up the past for political gain, showing mercy.

We cannot and should not legislate to make people repent, forgive or be graceful. However, these principles are vital in some way at an institutional level if we want to empower and lead our citizens on to a better future not dictated by the events of our past. These are heart changes but they could be led by the Church and accompanied by very practical measures. The implementation of such framework principals can be challenging. Repentance is an unpopular concept because it involves admitting we were wrong and putting responsibility above rights. Repentance and forgiveness are deeply personal things which Christians understand through personal experience. If we cannot collectively agree on both sides that some things were wrong, murder and sectarianism, then we are bound to live through these things again. We need a new, shared mind-set, a forgiving and gracious attitude (not always dragging up the past or seeking our pound of flesh) to overcome difficulties which will definitely arise. This is about moving beyond constitutional agreements to a place of relationship commitment which we're calling for at Stormont. A commitment to go beyond partisan politicians and treat each other with respect and dignity, working for the common good.

> We propose a joint statement of acknowledgement on the past. Acknowledging death, pain, violence, hurtful and actions and attitudes and a turning away from this. This would be a line in the sand statement issued jointly with humble remorse and a commitment to future distance from harmful actions and attitudes.

Forefathers

In this part of the world, the idea of forefathers is an extremely important part of our collective community culture. Loyalists and unionists celebrate the victories of their forefathers. Forefathers are equally respected in the Republican and Nationalist tradition. From the United Irish Men and the Easter Rising through to the more recent Troubles there is a custom of remembering and respecting the Irish 'patriot dead'. Many of our forefathers are long since dead but their grievances live on, profoundly shaping the culture of our entire community. Deeply engrained within the psyche of our entire community is a profound reverence and respect for the sacrifices of those who have gone before. It's time for new sacrifices to be made on behalf of our for-fathers. These new sacrifices will also cost us our lives – not in the sense of death but a completely new way of living. At the crux of our inability to move on from the past is fear. A fear that unionist politicians often use as a political strategy – fear of a United Ireland, loss of gospel freedom, terrorism, loss of control, loss of a flag, losing the right to parade. The same can largely be said of the Nationalist/Republican culture, there are things to be condemned and critiqued. Each side is

so scared of betraying our forefathers that we've forgotten we are forefathers to generations to come. Let's not become so concerned with cultural preservation that we miss creating new shared culture in the here and now. Perhaps the most profound way to honour our forefathers is to let their victories and defeats rest in peace with them. Can we honour forefathers in new ways, not by picking up their grievances but by taking up a new cause? Can we offer more creative ways of remembering, commemorating and celebrating?

Given the macho obsession with "Forefathers" and the fact that 91% of those who lost their lives in the troubles where men (http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/cts/smyth97a.htm), we suggest the establishment of a program for young men in Loyalist/Republican areas. The idea is to help people examine the influence of previous generations and determine what legacy they want to leave for their children and grandchildren - transforming their passion and pride for their past into thoughtful reflection upon the impact of their own actions on the future.

Time for New Language and New Understanding on Sharing

It's interesting that we sometimes share by dividing. If I was to share a loaf of bread with a friend I would split it in two. Ironically this understanding of sharing actually leads to more division. This is often the approach taken to sharing in Northern Ireland. Each side has their own broad culture with no relationship or dependency on the other. We need to rethink what it means to share. It is often understood as giving something away, having less for yourself - a parent making their child share their toys or sweets, being met with protestation. Sharing because one should and one has to, not to bless others or to achieve fairness. The Unionist community particularly has seen sharing in this way, as losing ground, giving things away, suffering loss to the other's gain. Shared future, shared space, shared island, shared history, shared culture. The prevailing experience of 'sharing' in Northern Ireland is closer to 'divide and conquer'.

- Shared spaces are sometimes divided and used, or seen to be used, to dominate the other through murals, flags, parades or other activities.
- Shared history is divided. Narratives are fought over, rewritten and used to dominate the other.
- There are shared forms of cultural expression; language, parading, protesting, flags, music, storytelling - but on the whole we're not telling the same stories. Each side uses their culture to draw their own boundaries against the other.
- Although we understand the concept of a shared future, it remains divided. In one sense this is entirely legitimate, everyone has the freedom to pursue different constitutional aims. However the futures of a United Kingdom or United Ireland are not united, they appear to be mutually exclusive.

Mutual creation and cultivation are perhaps better ways to understand 'sharing'. The word 'mutual' refers to something held in common by two or more parties, something owned by its members with the profits distributed between them. It's about being interdependent. This idea of common ownership and common benefit is important. When a mutual venture does well everyone benefits. Our culture will only truly be shared if we create or cultivate it together. This process of mutual creation gives ownership to the whole community. **We, and many others, care more about the character of NI than its constitution. We are more interested in the common cause and common values of our people than our flag.**

Mutual Cause

In the 2007 Sinn Fein document 'A new beginning - A new Ireland' we see one of the aims being 'guaranteeing **civil and religious liberty for all**.' The Orange Order may centre around defending Protestantism but it's origins and indeed the 'Glorious Revolution' was all about the exact same aim - guaranteeing '**civil and religious liberty for all**.' The Glorious Revolution was also about laying the framework for democratic government in these islands. This is something both Republicans and Loyalists affirm strongly as part of a modern day UK or Ireland. **Therefore three mutual causes to unite around on a daily basis are civil freedoms, religious liberty and democracy. This could be a useful mutual framework for policy development.**

Mutual values

MLAs have a 'general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole' and a 'special duty to their constituents.' But what are the common or mutual values between Republicans and Loyalists? Values which the Church, Republican and Loyalist communities could seek together are civil freedoms, religious liberty and democracy as outlined above as well as equality and justice. We would also suggest a framework incorporating family, human dignity and well-being.

We need a framework for public discussion on the values held in common in our society, to create a value framework that everyone can affirm to guide mutual decisions and culture-making. Such values include; Equality/diversity, justice/mercy, truth/grace, freedom/responsibility.

Can we have a structured public discussion on the values held in common across this place. There are examples of various models attempting to approach policy from a basis of common values. This goes far beyond the Nolan principles of public life and an MLA's duty of office. These are civic values. For example, on a large scale the commonwealth charter outlines the values that all countries under the commonwealth hold and work under and together in (http://thecommonwealth.org/our-charter). Other examples include the ' African charter on values and principles of public service' (http://www.au.int/en/content/african-charter-values-and-principles-public-service-and-administration) and the adopted bill 'A policy for civil society' 2010 in Sweden. Within the framework of the policy there is intense dialogue with value based organisations, beginning in 2008 with the government entering into an agreement with 90 value based organisations within social sphere and the Swedish association of local authorities and regions, (http://www.government.se/sb/d/14291). This has resulted in many benefits for the community. For example it has worked towards improving the integration of newly arrived immigrants. Northern Ireland in its post-conflict state needs to adapt this approach more than ever to move forward.

The Church's Role

We acknowledge that the church hasn't always got it right. We remind ourselves that God is not Protestant nor Catholic. He is not conservative, liberal, unionist, nationalist or any other man-made label we try to make stick on him. We cannot tether God to our limited theology. May he forgive us for making him into an idol in our image. Jesus prayed for future believers that all of them may be one (John 17:21). Some have been so busy barricading the doors of the reformed church against the Catholic tradition that they have failed to notice the elephant of sectarianism in the pew. We acknowledge that the local Church continually needs a unified view of the church of Jesus Christ and his gospel beyond this time and place.

However, as noted above, Churches can and are working together for a much safer and united community. The scholar Bonhoeffer argues that we need to let our guards down and confess with each other to be in true community. We need to share with each other our common and dark experiences in a way that opposes hostility and finds common ground in our desire for a peaceful society. The aforementioned principles of repentance, forgiveness and grace are vital at an institutional level if we want to empower and lead our citizens on to a better future.

Hard work, good laws and political agreements will only take us so far – we need grace/generosity to create spaces for transformation.

•The church is a missional body across the globe. The church must constantly ask if the way it ministers enables it to reach across class, age, race and gender. Locally it must also ask if the flying of national flags and singing the national anthem is impacting its mission positively or negatively. The issue is not about what is right and wrong but what is wise and missional.

•For over a thousand years a rich Christian heritage has shaped the culture of this island. Today we continue to seek the peace and prosperity of this place. Could we as a church, help our community to creatively celebrate and commemorate things that aren't linked to one side defeating the other? Are there new spaces in the public square to work collaboratively on issues like family, well-being, social justice and the sanctity of life?

•There is no biblical mandate to parade or prohibition against it. People have the freedom to parade and express their culture within the law. The question for the church is a missional one. We suggest that the church have an important conversation about the place of loyal institutions within the mission of the church.

•Jesus calls us to love God and our neighbour. The simple act of opening our homes is not just Christian hospitality but an intentional contribution to goo relations. More controversially Jesus calls us to love our enemies. This is so revolutionary to our cultural norm that violence erupted recently at an event on forgiveness. We inhibit a new dimension of human relationships. It can't be forced or legislated for it's a work of grace. We suggest that the church source a way of ensuring that love, hospitality, forgiveness and grace are part of our defining characteristics.

•It is imperative that we learn how to pass peace-making into the next generation. Peace-making language isn't fashionable compared to other social justice issues and can be lost on a younger generation of Christian who see the troubles as a previous generations moral failure. We suggest that the church create a new language and fresh ways of communicating reconciliation and conflict resolution. Training colleges also need to give proper and specific history and context for ministry in Northern Irish society.

•Our cultural, political and spiritual forbears continue to influence us today. We recommend that churches publicly give permission to new generations to think and dream differently about the future of this island.

The Evangelical Alliance, formed in 1846, is the largest body serving the two million evangelical Christians in the UK. We have a membership of denominations, churches, organisations and individuals. In the UK we work across 79 denominations, 3,300 churches, 750 organisations and thousands of individual members.

We are a founding member of the World Evangelical Alliance, a global network of more than 600 million evangelical Christians.

Our Northern Ireland office was established in 1987 and for the last 25 years we have been contributing to public life here.

Our mission is to unite evangelicals to present Christ credibly as good news for *spiritual and social transformation.*

Our 2 main objectives are bringing Christians together - Unity, and helping them listen to, and be heard by, the government, media and society - Advocacy.

evangelical alliance
better together

Forthspring Inter Community Group

Forthspring Submission to The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Introduction

Forthspring Inter Community Group is committed to working with local people in the Springfield/Woodvale area and promoting good relations within and between these communities. Forthspring is situated on the Falls/Shankill interface and has over 16 years experience of providing services on a cross community basis.

Our vision is of a diverse and peaceful community, where all people are free to live with dignity, hope, respect and understanding.

Forthspring has been successful in providing a much needed safe and welcoming environment where people from both communities can meet and find a different way from the violence and division of the past.

Forthspring brings together Protestants and Catholics to build relationships, understanding and trust by supporting people to talk about their religious, cultural and political similarities and differences within a safe space and to simply socialize and engage with each other.

Using a community development approach, a range of programmes are delivered that bring together people of all ages to move across the wall and to break down barriers. These include a large youth project, work with men and women, Springers after schools and senior citizens. Current projects include the 5 Decades project gathering peoples stories and memories of living through the 'Troubles', the community planning group, a gardening project and a range of art projects.

Key Points

- Ofm/dfm funding: the process of allocating money based on the initial call following publication of TBUC has been simply appalling.
- TBUC is a limited document
- There are major gaps in TBUC if the objective of reconciliation and building a shared future is to be achieved. These include the failure to address dealing with the past, the failure to address divisive issues such as parading and flags and the failure to confront the reality of barriers to reconciliation and sharing, most notably the persistence of sectarian attitudes and behaviours.
- The lack of the ability of political opponents to make progress on allegedly agreed goals undermines confidence in TBUC and in the general public's belief that progress is being made.
- The absence of a willingness or capacity to tackle difficult issues has reduced much of TBUC to agreement around the lowest common denominator of sharing in education and work with young people.
- This focus on the lowest common denominator is likely to skew and emasculate Peace IV funding.
- Whilst the emphasis on shared spaces and young people is welcome, resources committed to young people in particular should be additional and not simply support main stream responsibilities in education and training.
- The vision of a peaceful and reconciled society needs to be approached from two directions – a broad vision within which people can agree to disagree on constitutional and contentious issues based on respect for each other and a legislative framework that includes clear definitions of sectarianism and good relations.
- We would add our voice to those who have engaged in CRC's consultation process and argued that 'interface work should recognise the critical need for relatonship-building across interfaces as a necessary pre-conditon before complete barrier removal. It should be informed by practice on the ground, as well as providing structured support for relationship-building initiatives which enable communities either side of a barrier to develop the trust and mutual understanding which lessens fear and provides the context for interface barrier removal.
- We would add that relationship building must be combined with a strong emphasis on community safety and regeneration to provide people with the confidence to support the removal of barriers and the evidence that it will be accompanied by social and economic improvement on interfaces.
- TBUC proposes committing resources to community interface workers. Too often community workers are inclined to view young people as part of the problem. There are incidents at interfaces in which young people are involved but the reality is that

most young people are committed to engaging with the other community and are often in advance of adults in their community in relation to this. Resources spent on community interface workers should ensure that such workers have a clear remit to take on board the views and aspirations of all sections of the community, including young people and that there needs to be a youth work approach adopted to engaging with young people, particularly on the streets.

- There should be co-ordination of reconciliation efforts on a regional basis should be facilitated by a regional body that is independent from government. The regional body should be tasked with the management and efficient delivery of long-term funding as well as developmental support for organisations and individuals within communities.

- Much of Ofm/dfm's approach is based on the assumption of two mutually exclusive communities separated by a barrier or wall. An example was the Interface Barrier Support Package outlined in the TBUC statement from the First and deputy First Minister on 9th May 2013 . This only part of the story. In reality, on interfaces, there are existing points of contact and engagement between communities. Resources should be committed, not just to winning support for the reduction of divisions within communities but across communities, encouraging and building on what already exists. In particular individuals and groups who engage in cross community activity in advance of the reduction of barriers should be positively encouraged and supported.

- The delay in releasing Social Investment Fund monies evidenced the limitations of a strategy based on sharing resources out on the basis of the two communities, Protestant/Catholic; Unionist/Nationalist. The competition for scarce resources will always ensure that such an approach is divisive. We acknowledge the reality of community divisions but would argue that to achieve a shared future based on respect the criteria of need and fairness must determine the allocation. And it is not only a matter of who receives what, it is also a matter of how things are done. Do structures and practices promote the breaking down of divisions or the promotion of separation? Locally on the Springfield Road services are provided in a way that naturally reproduces community divisions. One side of the peace wall is policed by Grosvenor Road Police Station, the other side by Tennant Street. The left hand side of the Springfield Road heading up the road from the City Centre is cleaned by Belfast City Council's Environment Services team based in Springfield Avenue, the right hand side is cleaned by the team based in Tennant Street.

Conclusion

Forthspring continues to believe that progress is being made towards a peaceful and inclusive society but there is much to be done in tackling sectarianism, racism and social inequality. Key areas have not been adequately addressed including dealing with the past and contentious issues such as parading and flags. A combination of political agreement, leadership and work on the ground is required to achieve the progress that is both possible and essential.

Foyle Trust for Integrated Education

FOYLE TRUST FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

14 Crawford Square
Derry~Londonderry
BT48 7HR
10 October 2014.

The Committee Clerk
Committee of OFMDFM
Northern Ireland Assembly
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST

Re: "TOGETHER: Building a United Community": Public Consultation 2013-14.
Dear Sir/Madam

We begin by thanking your Committee for carrying out this public consultation on this crucial issue.

BROADENING CURRENT HE, FE AND SPECIAL SCHOOL INTEGRATED EDUCATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND:
Given the experience of this Trust for Integrated Education over the past 24 years, our submission will focus particularly our school system.
Currently Northern Ireland's universities, colleges of Further Education and Special Schools are integrated. We work to see this integration extended increasingly at primary and second level.

OFMDFM:
There is a widespread wish in Northern Ireland for a more united society. In the field of education, the Parties represented by the current First Minister and Deputy First Minister are both publicly committed to reconciliation. The Ministers have personally spoken publicly on this issue:

- Mr Peter Robinson MLA: First Minister: 16 October 2010:

  "We cannot hope to move beyond our present community divisions while our young people are educated separately … The reality is that our education system is a benign form of apartheid, which is fundamentally damaging to our society. Who among us would think it acceptable that a state or nation would educate its young people by the criteria of race with white schools or black schools? Yet we are prepared to operate a system which separates our children almost entirely on the basis of their religion. As a society and administration we are not mere onlookers of this; we are participants and continue to fund schools on this basis. And then we are surprised that we continue to have a divided society…

  "I entirely accept that such fundamental change will not happen overnight but that is no excuse for further delay in making a start. I know that we will face difficulties in dislodging the vested interests that are so strong in this sector, but I am absolutely convinced that we must."

- Mr Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA, Minister for Education: 16 November 2001.

  "As regards integrated education, people know where I stand. There is a duty and responsibility on me as Minister to both encourage and facilitate those parents who chose integrated education for their children. I intend to support those people the whole way down the line".

THE VIEW FROM OVERSEAS:
The view of the wider world of Northern Ireland's divided school system is exemplified by American officials who have worked in Northern Ireland:

- Barbara Stephenson, US Consul General, Belfast: "The News Letter" 3 March 2004.
  "the default is set on a Protestant school and a Catholic school rather than an integrated school ... It is mind-boggling from an American perspective".
- Ambassador Mitchell B. Reiss, the US Special Envoy to Northern Ireland, addressing The National Committee on US Foreign Policy in New York on 30 September 2004:
  "Looking forward, the United States also has a role to play in supporting the Shared Future agenda, as our focus on integrated education shows. After taking on this assignment, I was astonished to learn that roughly 95% of Northern Ireland schoolchildren are educated in segregated schools. As Americans, we have first-hand experience with segregation, not so long ago. And we know it doesn't work. Segregation short-changes the students by denying them exposure to one half their society. And it weakens the country by embedding misunderstanding and distrust.
  "... As a matter of priority, the Northern Ireland government and civic and religious leaders should recognise that their society will be richer and stronger if their educational system encourages more integration, so children there grow up embracing the diversity of their own culture".

OFFER TO OFMDFM COMMITTEE:
This Trust has long and personal experience in assisting parents to create integrated schools. We are pleased to offer this experience to the deliberations and policy-making of your Committee and to help you form your recommendations to the Office of First Minister Deputy First Minister.

We shall be pleased to hear from you and wish you well in your vitally important work.

Yours sincerely

Anne Montgomery and Colm Cavanagh
Co-Chairs.

Ulster GAA, The Irish Football Association, The IRFU (Ulster Branch)

Ulster GAA, The Irish Football Association,
The IRFU (Ulster Branch)

Joint Inquiry Response – Together: Building a United Community

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1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to put into context the current positions of Ulster GAA, the Irish FA and the IRFU (Ulster Branch) in relation to the T: BUC Strategy as well as make comment and provide recommendations to feed into the final formation of the programme.

The three codes have developed a positive relationship through the delivery of collaborative programmes, sharing experiences and methods of best practice. There is a strong willingness for the three governing bodies to build on the significant progress made as a result of the partnership.

A key outcome from the growing relationship between the three codes a number of flagship projects have been delivered, such as the 'Sport in the Community' Programme, funded under the Department for Social Development which aims to deliver volunteer, club and community development projects through a sports lens. As well as this a number of joint projects have been established, such as the Game of Three Halves programme, annual joint Good Relations Conference, the Belfast Interface Games, the Stadia Redevelopment and the 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion through Sport' Programme.

During this time the partnership has gained considerable experience in the field of Good Relations and welcomes the opportunity to submit recommendations to the Together: Building a United Community (T: BUC) Strategy. Sport is in important part of the Northern Ireland society, with a firm place in the culture of the region. We are enthused by the support from local government in investing in sport to tackle important societal issues, in recent years.

With the launch of the T: BUC Strategy and sport cited as a model of good practise through the Game of Three Halves, the three codes view this as an opportunity to enhance the social impact of sport and strengthen the foundations already built through current programmes. The T: BUC Strategy serves as a platform for sport to be applied to the delivery of the headline actions under the four strands of the strategy. Ulster GAA, the Irish FA and the IRFU (Ulster Branch) contribute to over 90% of all sports participation in Northern Ireland. The reach of the three major governing bodies highlights the potential for collaborative projects to have real impact against the Good Relations Indicators and Headline Actions under the T: BUC priorities. It is the view of the three sports that the good relations indicators are robust but involvement in sport isn't adequately reflected.

Sport is at the heart of culture in Northern Ireland, and an important feature of the community. To a certain extent sport is ahead of the game on a number of social issues, particularly in the area of good relations. Sport enhances a sense of belonging and safety as well as providing a safe space for people to express their own culture and their shared culture.

The three codes have an excellent track recorded working with various Government Departments through funded projects that deliver against the Programme for Government and broader government priorities. This experience positions the three sports to work effectively with OFMDFM in the implementation of the T: BUC Strategy.

The strategic aims of the three codes are consistent with the T: BUC Strategy, with a clear focus on driving the value of sport in society. Each of the sports is currently delivering a number of programmes that utilise sport as a tool to deliver against wider social outcomes. Ensuring inclusivity and providing opportunities for lifelong involvement in sport is a key component to these programmes.

While it is important to recognise the successful collaborations between the sports, it is of equal importance to highlight the work each body has delivered which its specific sport.

Ulster GAA have considerable experience in delivering club and community development programmes, putting the club at the centre of the community as a hub to enjoy Gaelic Sport and Pastimes. Initiatives such as Club Maith sets best practise for GAA Clubs across Ulster, with a specific emphasis on volunteerism, community enhancement and culture & heritage. This programme promotes that sports clubs are about more than playing the game but about being woven within the fabric of the community.

The Irish FA are well known for their 'Football for All' Programme, which aims to create a fun, safe and inclusive culture throughout football in Northern Ireland. The 'Football for All' Programme works across all strands of the game and plays a vital role in engaging with those that are socially marginalised and in peace building. The programme demonstrates the power of sport in bringing people together and impacting wider social issues.

The IRFU (Ulster Branch) have substantial experience in utilising Rugby as way of engaging with underrepresented groups, such as females and people with disabilities. Flagship projects like the International Tag Rugby Festival served as a celebration of Disability Rugby by inviting over 400 players from across the UK and Ireland to play in competition at the Kingspan Stadium. The projects leading up to the event focused on providing new opportunities for people with disabilities to participant in tag rugby as part of a key strategic aim of creating a more inclusive Rugby Community in Ulster.

The three codes have the ability to have considerable impact on the key priorities of the T: BUC Strategy through existing programmes and infrastructure. As well as this there is considerable scope to develop innovative projects, such as a new Cross Stadia Sport and Education Programme, which have the potential to ensure a real and meaningful impact on the wider Northern Ireland Community.

2. Introduction

2.1. IRFU (Ulster Branch)/Ulster Rugby

The I.R.F.U (Ulster Branch)/Ulster Rugby is responsible for the leadership, development and growth of the game of Rugby Union within the nine counties of Ulster. This includes the full spectrum of Rugby Union from grass roots participation through to the Ulster Rugby Professional team, which participates in two cross border tournaments, the European Cup and Guinness PRO12.

As part of the ongoing development and growth of the game, the IRFU (Ulster Branch) aims to provide opportunities to grow the game at grassroots level in areas where previously there has been little or no exposure to the game. These initiatives range from grassroots development programmes in schools, female leadership programmes, disability & inclusion programmes to match night experiences, the community gym initiative and player appearances – all of which contribute equally to the growth of the game.

The IRFU (Ulster Branch) recognize the significant role that sport has to play in wider society. It is with this in mind that programmes are designed in a way not only to encourage playing the game but enjoying the wider social aspects that involvement in sport can have on the individual and wider community.

2.2. Gaelic Athletic Association (Ulster GAA)

The GAA is the world's largest volunteer sporting, cultural and community organisation with over 1.2 million members of 3,000 clubs located in 54 countries across the world. The GAA promotes the indigenous sports of the island of Ireland namely Hurling, Gaelic Football, Camogie, Handball and Rounders in addition to the promotion of Irish Culture, Language and Pastimes. The GAA is an amateur sporting body governed by volunteers. The Ard Chomhairle (Central Council) of the GAA comprises of delegates from GAA units across the world and oversees the governance and policy.

The GAA is by rule and policy a strictly non-party political, anti-sectarian and anti-racist organisation. The organisation is committed to the values of respect, tolerance and the vision of a shared future as outlined in the Good Friday Agreement. The GAA underlines its commitment to these values by engaging in an important community outreach programme, which involves dialogue and engagement with individuals, and groups who traditionally have had no interaction with the Association.

Ulster GAA is the Provincial Council and governing body for the GAA in Ulster, which oversees and supports the activities of over 250,000 members, 584 Clubs and 9 County Committees. Ulster GAA is an open and welcoming organisation that encourages involvement from everyone regardless of gender, community and religious background, physical and mental ability, race, nationality, age profile, sexual preference or social background in the Association.

2.3. Irish Football Association (IFA)

The Irish Football Association (IFA) was formed in 1880 and is the governing body of football in Northern Ireland, working to develop all strands of the game – international, domestic and grassroots football.

The vision of the Irish Football Association is 'to develop, foster and promote football for all in Northern Ireland', and intends to become a world-class organisation with a winning mentality at all levels. The Association has developed a series of values, which will act as guides as to the way we conduct business.

These values (forming together the word 'PITCH') are as follows:

Professional – We must be professional in all we do, meticulous in our planning and execution, leaving no stone unturned and nothing to chance.

Inclusive – Football is truly for all and must be inclusive. Everyone loves the game regardless of gender, religion, politics, race or sexual orientation. We must continue to work to ensure all groups feel comfortable and welcome within the game in whatever role they fulfil.

Team – The Association must work as a team, each with his or her own task as part of a greater whole – knowing our roles and supporting and encouraging the other members of the team as we seek to achieve our winning goals.

Caring and Confident – The Association must show a duty of care for all involved in the game. It is not good enough to leave it to others – to all players, officials, supporters, referees, and administrators – everyone. We must show and be shown care and concern. Whilst the Association must be confident to believe in that we are doing in all aspects is right and for the right reasons.

Honesty – Being honest, saying it as it is, not being underhand or devious – honesty and integrity must be watch words for the Association.

Using these core values in our daily footballing and business life at the Association will enhance it, and show a maturity and sincerity, which will benefit the game and all who are involved in it.

The IFA has almost 1000 adult teams, 900 boys' teams, 300 school teams and 50 women's teams. Our work includes the development of both men's and women's football at the most senior level, operations, club licensing and facilities development, player registration, grassroots football (boys' and girl's), disability football, schools football, elite football development, coach education, safeguarding and player welfare and community relations.

3. IFA Strategic Conetext

3.1. Long Term Objectives and Strategic Plan (2013 - 2018)

The Association has identified six key long-term strategic objectives, which include:

- Qualify for a major tournament
- Deliver the new national stadium and improve other facilities
- Foster a balanced, flourishing senior domestic game
- Create a healthy domestic game at all other levels, i.e. intermediate, junior, women's, boys, schools
- Build a culture of lifelong participation in football
- Reach beyond the game – use the power of football for health, education and social development

The foundations of our strategic action plan are based on our six long term objectives across three areas - International, Domestic and Grassroots. Some of the key actions and priorities outlined within this strategy include:

3.1.1. Qualify for a major tournament

- Improve player welfare
- Elite Programme & Talent ID
- Presence in Schools
- Small sided games policy
- Coaching framework

3.1.2. Deliver the new national stadium and improve other facilities

- Complete **National Stadium** lease agreement
- Stadium management company
- Community consultation process
- Sub-regional projects: investment in a National Training Centre, Major Capital Intervention project, upgrade of grounds

designated under the Safety at Sports Grounds, **community and social cohesion** projects

3.1.3. Foster a balanced, flourishing senior domestic game

- Create a **league governance body**
- Develop club academies for better player development
- G**ood governance** in clubs (e.g. HMRC, salary capping)
- Develop club education on best practice planning and management
- **Club Excellence Mark** for clubs involved at all levels of the game which will include community relations and coach education
- **Respect** campaign
- **Good Relations and Fans Charter**

3.1.4. Create a healthy domestic game at all other levels, i.e. intermediate, junior, women's, boys, schools

- Support clubs to become **'community beacons' or hubs** through club education and development programme
- **Club Excellence Mark** award as a benchmark of club quality
- Build closer links with Divisional Associations to review national competitive/recreational football structure
- W**omen's football plan**
- B**oys' and schools football plans**

3.1.5. Reach beyond the game – use the power of football for health, education and social development

- RESPECT Campaign
- Social impact tracker
- 'Football for All' (FFA) Educational Resource
- International Fans Handbook
- 'Football for All' introductory award
- Continue to build on success of Homeless World Cup Poland, through Street League Project and future international tournaments
- FFA Youth Forum established
- International Fans Seminar
- Social and economic impact of FFA on communities across NI using data from social impact tracker
- Good Relations and Fans Charter
- Interface football programme
- World United multicultural programme recognition

3.1.6. Build a culture of lifelong participation in football

- D**isabilities football plan**

- **Volunteer Development** Programme
- Annual joint community volunteer awards
- Youth football forum
- Irish FA **volunteering policy**
- Veterans football plan
- **'Sport in the Community Programme'** collaboration with Ulster GAA and IRFU (Ulster Branch)
- I**nterface and homeless** football projects
- S**ummer camps & festivals**
- Create culture of **futsal**

4. Ulster GAA Strategic Context

4.1. Ulster GAA Strategy, 'Family and Community: The Fabric of the GAA'

"Teaghlaigh agus Pobail: An Fabraic de CLG" is the third strategic plan to be rolled out by Ulster GAA. All the targets set in the previous two plans were achieved, most of them well ahead of schedule and the delivery of this plan is following the same pattern.

Five core values shape and influence how Ulster GAA does its work. Those values are: Community, Volunteerism, Identity, Inclusion and Excellence.

The detail of Ulster GAA's work is in turn taken forward under five themes:

- Keeping Ulster GAA Fit for Purpose: Governance
- Increasing and Improving the Games
- Increasing and Improving the GAA Plant: Facilities and Infrastructure
- Enhancing the "Gaelic" in GAA: Culture and Heritage
- The GAA's End Purpose: Community Development, Inclusion and Cohesion

4.2. Public Affairs Resource and Programme, 'Building Better Communities'

The GAA underlines its commitment to the values of respect, tolerance and the vision of a shared future by engaging in an important community outreach programme. This programme involves dialogue and engagement with individuals and groups who traditionally have had no interaction with the Association. GAA Clubs are key community anchors and are key providers of sporting, cultural and community activities across Ulster. This approach aims to further diversify the make up of the GAA and to enhance understanding of the Association among those who may not have previously engaged with it.

4.3. Ulster GAA Community, Strategy and Public Department

Ulster GAA has a dedicated Department who are charged with bringing to life one of the 5 strategic themes, "The GAA's End Purpose: Community Development, Inclusion and Cohesion". The work of this Department aims to better equip Clubs to enhance the communities they exist in, addressing agendas such as health and wellbeing, cultural awareness, volunteer development, strategic development, inclusion and outreach.

4.4. Cultural Awareness Strategy (DCAL)

Ulster GAA is working with DCAL Languages and Waterways Ireland Branch to address historical tensions to develop greater, understanding, tolerance and respect for our indigenous cultural traditions.

5. IRFU (Ulster Branch) Strategic Context

As one of four provincial branches of the Irish Rugby Football Union, the IRFU (Ulster Branch) is aligned to the IRFU 2013-17 Strategic Plan - "From Grassroots to International Success; One Island, One Passion, One Goal''.

The IRFU Strategic Plan is built on the values of Irish Rugby.

- Respect - Discipline and respect are cornerstones of our game. Participants show respect both on and off the pitch for teammates, opponents, match officials, and all those involved in the rugby family.

- Integrity - Integrity is the foundation of the game. It is generated through honesty, transparency, ethical (Drug Free) and fair play.

- Inclusivity - Irish Rugby celebrates camaraderie and teamwork, which transcends gender and cultural, racial, geographic, political and religious differences.

- Fun - Rugby generates enjoyment, passion, pride, excitement, emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to the Irish Rugby Family.

- Excellence - Irish Rugby aspires to be a Leader in sport and in the community, which achieves success at all levels through being transparent, innovative and forward thinking. Irish rugby prides itself in doing things well and in a professional manner.

One of the goals of Rugby on the island of Ireland is to continue to grow our clubs and schools through a player experience that maximizes retention and creates playing opportunities for all those who wish to play rugby, from all communities and to promote an involvement in the game for life.

In addition the IRFU (Ulster Branch)/Ulster Rugby in its Business Plan 2014-17 has clearly identified its vision to be a World Class Rugby Region. The achievement of this vision is dependent on a number of key factors including growing the game beyond its traditional playing base, increasing the number of and developing capacity of volunteers and an creating welcoming & sustainable clubs that serve the needs of the community.

6. Best Practice: Sport and Good Relations

6.1. IRFU Initiatives

6.1.1. Welcoming Clubs Programme

The IRFU Welcoming Clubs Programme is designed to support the team "off the field" in growing the club and strengthening links to the wider community. The vision behind the programme is to create a community environment where the focus is on fun, safe activity, challenging activity and social outcomes.

6.1.2. Club Excellence Award

The IRFU Club Excellence Award celebrates and promotes best practice in on & off pitch management of a Rugby Club. The Award supports clubs in developing the best standards across the following key areas: Rugby Development, Club Management, Child Protection, Volunteer Management, Community Engagement and Health & Safety.

6.1.3. Club Community Rugby Officer (CCRO) Programme

The CCRO Programme is a partnership between the IRFU and affiliated clubs. The purpose of the programme is to provide clubs with the capacity to employ a development officer who is responsible for reaching out to the surrounding community of the club through participation programmes, opening access to facilities, creating new opportunities for underrepresented groups and supporting club structures.

6.1.4. Play Rugby Programme

The Play Rugby Programme is aimed at creating a Rugby Legacy within schools and communities across Northern Ireland and Ulster. The purpose of the programme is to equip new schools and communities to sustain rugby through the provision of equipment, educational resources and training. This provides schools/communities with another means of engaging with other schools and communities through the medium of Rugby.

6.2. Values Based Rugby

Rugby is a value-based game with a number of core values that develop players/coaches/volunteers/administrators/fans within a social and moral context. The international values of the game are: Integrity, Passion, Solidarity, Discipline and Respect.

These values are central to the fabric of the game and run right across all levels and aspects of Rugby in Ulster, from the elite level to grassroots participation. These values provide the base for the culture of Rugby and focus on the development of the social outcomes that are inherent to participation in sport.

6.3. IRFU (Ulster Branch) 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion (PETPSE) Through Sport' Programme

The PETPSE through Sport Programme ties into the redevelopment of the Kingspan Stadium aims to provide new opportunities through Rugby for people from areas of multiple deprivation and under represented groups e.g. females and people with disabilities.

Central to the delivery of this programme is creating an open and inclusive environment for people from all backgrounds to enjoy Rugby. The programme focuses on five key areas: Increasing participation among people from areas of multiple deprivation, providing new opportunities to increase female representation, providing opportunities for people with disabilities to get involved, promoting fitness and healthy lifestyle and leaving a lasting Rugby Legacy across the province.

6.4. 'Sport in the Community' Programme

The project is a joint partnership and programme between the IRFU (Ulster Branch), Ulster Gaelic Athletic Association (Ulster GAA) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) to help support club/community development and volunteering as well as use sport as a tool for community development.

The project was incepted organically from a relationship that had been developed over a number of years. There was a clear willingness to embark on a joint project, which would seek to deliver on areas such as:

- Club & Community Development
- Diversity programmes and Good Relations
- Training and Development Programmes
- Volunteer Development (supporting DSD Volunteering Strategy for NI)
- Policy Development
- Capacity Building

Whilst the three codes were already delivering in these areas, this joint flagship project would allow the three governing bodies to further develop their programmes and have a more significant impact on club and community development, capacity building and volunteer development. It also provided an opportunity for shared learning and examples of best practice.

Some of the projects main achievements over the past two years include:

- Developing Associations' framework for club and volunteer development
- Policy development and implementation
- Increasing reach and impact across Northern Ireland
- Programme development and implementation

The project has allowed for the governing bodies to deliver a host of joint work, but also to deliver a number of programmes specific to their own sporting requirements. The three codes have delivered the following programmes:

- Volunteer Goldmark (Young volunteers)
- Game of Three Halves (cross code diversity programme)
- Training workshops (sponsorship, funding, governance)
- Good relations events
- Volunteer recognition events

Independently, the three Associations have developed and delivered their own programmes in the following areas:

- Club development
- Volunteer development
- Community development
- Diversity and good relations

6.5. Kingspan Stadium Redevelopment

A significant investment by DCAL into the Stadia Redevelopment Programme enabled the IRFU (Ulster Branch) to construct a state of the art stadium at Ravenhill Grounds with a capacity of approximately 18,000.

An important element of the redevelopment is increasing community access to the stadium and working towards the vision set out in the Northern Ireland Regional Development Strategy that Belfast will be a "City of Culture & Sport" by 2025.

Through community engagement and education programmes the stadium acts as a shared space where people can access rugby and help improve deprivation.

The stadium acts as a place to inspire people to participate in sport (rugby), which is at the core of DCAL's Strategy for Sport and Sport NI's Corporate Plan. The stadium is fully accessible and aims to promote equality and tackle social exclusion through sport.

6.6. IRFU (Ulster Branch): Nevin Spence Education Centre

As part of the redeveloped stadium complex at the Kingspan Stadium, Ulster Rugby will welcome visitors to a new education and heritage Centre celebrating the evolution of the game and its positive role in contributing to a healthy, shared society.

Housed in the new Memorial End Stand, The Nevin Spence Centre will enable visitors from the education and tourism sectors to explore the rich heritage of rugby in Ulster and will provide a dynamic stimulus for learning in alignment with the NI Curriculum and Ulster Rugby's existing outreach programmes.

Offering engaging interactive content, powerful audio visual storytelling and archive materials, it is envisaged that the NSC will also stimulate awareness of the positive impact of rugby on the health and welfare of individuals and communities and may result in increased participation from those in areas traditionally underrepresented in the sport.

A visit to the Centre will be a memorable experience, incorporating a curriculum-linked workshop with a dedicated Education Officer and an informative "behind the scenes" stadium tour. From the home changing rooms and media suite to the players' gym and training facilities, visitors will gain a fascinating insight into the home of Ulster Rugby.

6.7. Ulster Rugby: The Professional Team

A unique part of Ulster Rugby is the professional team associated to the province. In line with the values and culture of Rugby, our professional players are an important part of rugby both on and off the pitch.

As role models our professional players play an important role in growing and promoting rugby. Our players have the potential to positively impact the lives of the people they interact with, on and off the pitch – they serve as a platform to promote and inspire the values of Rugby. This is a core part of grassroots rugby, where player appearances, Q&As and special events compliment the delivery of various programmes.

6.8. Mid Ulster Sports Arena

The Mid Ulster Sports Arena (MUSA) acts as a safe and shared space for sports participation. The complex houses the facilities to caters for the majority of field sports with both indoor and outdoor spaces.

The MUSA enables the three codes to deliver programmes on the same site as well as cater for club participation to promote lifelong enjoyment of sport. The facility acts as a space where sport can be celebrated, where people come together for a common goal and embrace diversity as a crucial part of the game.

6.9. Game of Three Halves (GO3H)

The GO3H is a collaborative partnership between Ulster GAA, the IFA and the IRFU (Ulster Branch) that aims to provide opportunities for people from different backgrounds to have positive interactions through sport.

The three major governing bodies have driven this initiative from its inception with a focus on promoting respect for diversity. The demand for the GO3H has grown significantly during the past two years with considerable potential to enhance the delivery of the programme.

6.10. Belfast Interface Games (BIG)

The BIG uses the model of the GO3H to deliver a summer intervention programme in partnership with Ulster GAA, the IFA, the IRFU (Ulster Branch) and PeacePlayers International NI (PPINI).

The purpose of the programme is to offer young people the opportunity to participate in Gaelic Football, Rugby Union and Soccer in a Summer Camp setting. To compliment participation in each of the sports, a number of sport themed good relations workshops are delivered during the camps.

6.11. IRFU (Ulster Branch): Female Leadership Programme

The programme aims to grow female leadership within rugby in Ulster at all levels; playing, coaching, volunteering and administrating.

A panel of females will engage in a yearlong training programme which includes accredited rugby coaching, fitness instructor qualifications, practical experience and leadership training.

6.12. IRFU (Ulster Branch): Get Fit Women's Boot Camp

This programme is designed to utilise health and fitness as a way of engaging females into Rugby. Females are underrepresented within the leadership, playing and coaching of the game. This programme operates

out of Rugby Clubs across the province as a way of introducing new females to the sport by focusing on the health and fitness benefits to rugby.

6.13. International Tag Rugby Festival for People with Disabilities

The International Tag Rugby Festival is hosted across the UK and Ireland as a method of promoting and celebrating Disability Rugby for people with Learning Disabilities.

The Festival was hosted at the Kingspan Stadium during June 2014 and brought together over 400 players from across Northern Ireland, Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland to participate in a tournament that focused on participation and enjoyment.

6.14. IRFU (Ulster Branch): Community Gym Initiative

As part of capital investment the IRFU (Ulster Branch) have established 15 Community Gyms across Northern Ireland. The purpose of this programme is to promote and deliver health & fitness programmes, create access to gym/fitness services/facilities, support capacity building within deprived communities, enhance the employability of local volunteers and act as a stepping stone to lifelong involvement in Rugby.

The vision of the initiative is to create community hubs where people can improve their health & fitness and enjoy the social benefits of physical activity/involvement in sport.

6.15. Creggan Rugby Project

The Creggan Rugby Project is a partnership programme between the IRFU (Ulster Branch), City of Derry (COD) RFC, Derry City Council and the Creggan Community with the aim of developing better relationships, increasing participation in rugby and building the capacity of local coaches & volunteers.

The project involves establishing a satellite Mini Rugby (Ages 6-12) in the Creggan area, which will act as a hub for players, coaches and volunteers from diverse backgrounds to network, grow rugby and develop new relationships.

6.16. 'Sport in the Community'

The project is a joint partnership and programme between the IRFU (Ulster Branch), Ulster Gaelic Athletic Association (Ulster GAA) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) to help support club/community development and volunteering over a three-year period (April 2012 - March 2015).

The focus areas of the project cover: volunteering, good relations, club & community development and capacity building.

6.17. Ulster Rugby Crew

The Ulster Rugby Crew is a volunteer programme primarily targeted at 16 – 24 year olds from areas of high social need. The purpose of the programme is to empower young people from all backgrounds through capacity building and practical experience.

Rugby Crew volunteers are offered opportunities to gain skills and qualifications through training as well as putting their newly acquired skills into practice through programmes in schools and community groups. The young volunteers are encouraged to link with their local rugby club to gain further experience and provide a voice for young people across domestic rugby.

6.18. Respect Programme (Londonderry YMCA)

The programme is targeted at low capacity, grass roots sports clubs in a developmental process. The aim is to increase the confidence and capacity of local sports clubs, with a specific focus on improving attitudes among young members of sports clubs on issues of sectarianism and racism. Participants are offered a range of Good Relations training, alongside Child Protection and First Aid training, thereby qualifying them to support the safe delivery of sporting activities within their clubs.

6.19. IFA 'Football for All' Project

The 'Football for All' project, based within the Community Relations department, aims to create a fun, safe and inclusive culture throughout football in Northern Ireland.

'Football for All' works across all strands of the game (international, domestic and grassroots) and plays a vital role in engaging with those socially excluded (marginalised groups, young people, ethnic minorities, homeless, refugees and asylum seekers) and in peace building.

The main aims and objectives of this project include the:

- exchange of information and addressing national issues through the provision of sport
- providing a platform on which football fans, coaches and volunteers can discuss issues of the past
- development of community relations projects and strategies within domestic football clubs
- working with community hubs in and around premier league clubs to heighten community awareness, making football

accessible for all, promoting inclusivity and providing a platform for social cohesion
- developing educational resources and enhancing links with school.
- working with grassroots projects directly delivering intervention and integration programmes addressing sectarianism, racism, social integration, mental health, volunteer development, unemployed and homelessness

'Football for All' delivers a range of grassroots based programmes, which use football as a hook for social development purposes such as:

- Street League
- Limestone United
- Ardoyne Interface
- Women's World United
- World United
- 'Football for All' Youth Forum

These programmes are designed to reach beyond the game, with the practical side of football coming secondary to the impact it can have on individuals and communities. The 'Football for All' project provides a diversionary approach for young people at risk, and opportunities for education and training (mental health, drugs and alcohol, good relations, mentoring, and skills development) and increased pathways to employment.

From 1 January 2015, the 'Football for All' project will be developed and coordinated by the new Football and Social Responsibility Unit, based within the Football Development Department of the Irish FA. This unit will be the training wing of the Association, with a focus on education, outreach and development for individuals, volunteers, clubs and communities.

6.20. IFA: 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion Through Sport' Programme

The Irish Football Association is currently funded through the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure under the 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion through Sport' Programme (2012 – 2015). Given the IFA's experience and reach into all communities across Northern Ireland, it was clear that our work could be supported under this programme, and indeed, that we could make a further substantial impact in terms of equality, diversity, community cohesion, health and well-being, social inclusion, community development, skills development, volunteering, pathways to employment, and social and economic regeneration.
This programme is far reaching in its geographical spread engaging with and delivering into communities across Northern Ireland, in some of the

most socially deprived communities across the country. It is vast in terms of its ability to meet the key aims and objectives of the programme, supporting a **Health** Awareness and Training Programme, Schools **Enterprise** Programme, **Club and Community Development** Programme, **Disability** Football Development Programme, **Small Sided Games** Programme and **'Football for All'** Programme.

6.21. Club Maith

Club Maith is an Ulster GAA derived initiative, which aims to acknowledge the unrivalled commitment and time invested by GAA volunteers to their GAA club. Tradition dictates that the work carried-out in GAA clubs is of a standard, which every GAA member can be proud of. Ulster GAA wish to recognise the sterling contribution of volunteerism in our clubs, while also laying-down foundations which will allow this culture to continue. To do this Ulster GAA have established core criteria on which clubs can benchmark themselves. The criteria have been divided into the following five areas: Governance, Duty of Care, Community Enhancement, Culture & Heritage and Coaching & Games Development. Club Maith offers guidance and support to clubs going through the process. The completion of the process will result in clubs gaining a better understanding of how good their club is, as well as ensuring best practice is standard in all clubs. Successful clubs are be awarded either bronze, silver, gold or platinum awards.

6.22. Ulster GAA Cúchulainn Programme

The Cúchulainn Programme is Ulster GAA's flagship annual cross-community and cross-border competition. It offers young people from non-GAA backgrounds the opportunity to learn the skills of Gaelic Games in both hurling and Gaelic Football, and then to compete with teams from across Ulster. The programme is delivered in both the controlled and maintained sector with games participation linked to relationship forging and friendships established. The Cup competition is now in it's seventh year with 11 teams representing 31 schools and over 220 players. The Cúchulainn Programme also comprises of a further outreach element including educational trips to Dublin and games participation in London.

6.23. Ulster GAA Community Outreach and Engagement Programme

The GAA underlines its commitment to the values of respect, tolerance and the vision of a shared future by engaging in an important community outreach programme. This programme involves dialogue and engagement with individuals and groups who traditionally have had no interaction with the Association. GAA Clubs are key community anchors and are key providers of sporting, cultural and community activities across Ulster. This approach aims to further diversify the make up of the GAA and to enhance understanding of the Assocaition among those who may not have previously engaged with it. We also open dialogue and

engagement with Community leaders from a range of backgrounds, including reaching out to political leaders and groups to promote tolerance and respect.

6.24. Ulster GAA Community, Health & Wellbeing Programme

Ulster GAA have an extensive health and wellbeing programme aimed at enhancing the welfare of its members in clubs, counties and schools. The range of programmes delivered include: Heads Up (Mental Health), Stand out from the Crowd (Drugs & Alcohol), Live to Play (Road Safety), Healthy Hamper (Primary Schools), Social Initiative (Older Members), Cardiac Screening (Heart Health), First Aid and AED (First Responders). This programme has now been formalized in the structures of the association with each club now appointing a volunteer health and wellbeing officer and adopting a policy to provide a framework for future delivery.

6.25. Ulster GAA Twinning Programme with oversees units

The GAA is vibrant in many areas overseas. Ulster is twinned with Canada and Britain in the development of our games. This relationship has evolved over time with support overseas being provided in a range of ways. Referee tutors have been provided to run courses and to referee important games. Coaching tutors have been trained to deliver coach education courses. Coaches have supported summer camps and Ulster has provided equipment to support these developments. At a strategic level time has been spent on developing plans and strategies to help focus the membership to drive the GAA forward.

6.26. Ulster GAA Cultural and Language Programme

Ulster GAA organises a wide range of projects to promote the Irish language. These include holding a weeklong summer course for learners in Gaeltacht Dhún na nGall, funding 'Gaeilge sa Chlub' university diploma scholarships, assisting with the administration of Irish classes in local areas, and producing special Irish-language resources such as a booklet listing the names of all clubs in Ulster. Gaelic culture is promoted through the annual Scór competitions and other occasional events. The Ulster GAA heritage programme encompasses the organisation of special commemorative events and initiatives to archive historical material relating to Gaelic games. Clubs are given advice on how to enhance their cultural output and archiving policies.

6.27. Ulster GAA: GAA 4 All Programme

The development of opportunities for children and young people with learning and physical disabilities has been a very successful programme. Coaches work closely with schools and community clubs to engage with

the groups and teach them the skills of the games. They progress to regional events both indoor and outdoor and play games as part of the National League and Ulster Championships programmes. This work is still evolving and with the help of Disability NI four hubs are emerging that will facilitate wheelchair hurling and football. Able-bodied people can also be involved in this activity and it is hoped that a formal competition will emerge in 2014 across the hubs.

6.28. Ulster GAA: 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty & Social Exclusion Through Sport' Programme

Ulster GAA has been working with DCAL to deliver it's own top priority, and most important objective, 'To Promote Equality, and Tackle Poverty and Social Exclusion'. It is the Department's goal to contribute to social cohesion and united communities, and through the elimination of the economic, cultural and societal inequalities. Ulster GAA was selected as a body to deliver this agenda and have done so aross the following areas:

- Urban Club and School Coaching Equipment and Support Programme:
- Disability Gaelic Games Programme:
- Club and Community Volunteer Development
- Health, Wellbeing and ASAP Programme
- GAA Volunteer Employment Skills Programme

7. Issues to be Addressed

Throughout the deliver of the T: BUC Strategy there are a number of important issues that need to be address for the implementation to be successful. If the Strategy is to realise the full vision of removing interface barriers, there are a number of key issues that need to be addressed before their removal:

7.1. Building Positive Intra & Inter Community Relationships
7.2. Deprivation
7.3. Levels of Unemployment
7.4. Levels of Anti-Social Behaviour
7.5. Decreasing the Occurrences of Hate Crime
7.6. Developing peoples Understanding Diversity
7.7. Providing Education & Training Opportunities
7.8. Enhancing Quality of Life
7.9. Addressing Health Inequalities
7.10. Increasing Access to Services
7.11. Increasing Access to Facilities

8. Role of the Community

Engaging the local community in decision-making is a key element to public policy making. The delivery of government driven programmes should reflect the needs of the local community through on-going consultation.

The T: BUC Strategy aims to remove interface barriers by 2023 and recognises the extent of the challenge associated with this. The majority of interface barriers are in areas of high social deprivation, with people feeling marginalised and disengaged from society. It is important to recognise that before barriers are considered for removal, it is crucial that people feel part of the community and engaged in society. The issue of interface barriers is a sensitive one, particularly for those living with them on their doorstep. The views and opinions of the people that will be most effected by their removal should take priority in the decision making process alongside those of the wider community.

Involving the local community in the development of Action Plans that work towards the removal of interface barriers in a timeframe that works for them, should be considered as part of T: BUC. This will provide a straight forward and transparent, step-by-step process developed and delivered in partnership with the local community.

9. Good Relations Indicators

The three codes are of the view that the Good Relations Indicators proposed by OFMDFM are robust, practical and measurable. It is with significant enthusiasm that we welcome the inclusion of sport in a number of the indicators, particularly under outcome 1.2 Young people engaging in bringing the community together.

However, sport is not limited under one Key Priority, in fact the impact of sport cuts across all four Key Priorities under the T: BUC Strategy. It is with this in mind that the following recommendations are included within the indicators to reflect this:

9.1. Shared space is accessible to all (Outcome 2.2):

Sports facilities are viewed as community hubs, where people come together to interact with others, enhance their health & fitness and develop personal & emotional skills.

This directly contributes to community cohesion and promotes positive social benefits. The sports club acts as a central point within the community where people can share their own cultural expression in a safe and inclusive environment. This is a key indicator that should be considered when measuring the impact of the T: BUC strategy.

9.2. A community where places and spaces are safe for all (Outcome 3.2):

Sports clubs/facilities are spaces for people to come together for a common passion and celebrate their cultural expression through sport.

A sports club promotes a self of belonging and working together for a common cause, which creates positive community cohesion.

Sports clubs/facilities should be considered as an additional area to be monitored under this outcome.

10. Sport as a Key T: BUC Delivery Method

The IFA, IRFU (Ulster Branch) and Ulster GAA contribute to over 90% of all sports participation in Northern Ireland – making the reach of the three major Sports Governing Bodies a considerable resource when working towards government priorities.

It is acknowledged in a number of Government Strategies that Sport is a key driver in delivering social and economic impact. The T: BUC Strategy details the following:

"We recognise that sport is a powerful tool in bringing people together. We know that sport can play a central role in breaking down divisions in society and can provide a mechanism to encourage sharing, learning, and friendship; as well as, healthy competition across all parts of our society."

While investment into sport and sporting facilities has been sited as a model of good practise for delivery of the T: BUC Strategy, it is important to recognise that sport is not limited in it's capacity to impact all Priorities of the Strategy.

Sport should be highlighted as a central delivery method within T: BUC across the four key Priorities. The associated principals of these priorities are all qualities demonstrated through sports clubs and sport in general. Sport is about working together for a common goal, creating a safe space where people can express their own identity but enjoy a joint identity at the same time. This is reflected in a recent Northern Ireland Life & Times survey where 84% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that sport has the ability to unite people across communities.
It is recommended that any future investment should take into consideration the extensive remit that the three major Governing Bodies have and the impact sport can have on the delivery of the T: BUC Strategy from a face to face grassroots perspective.

Sport also plays a vital role in contributing towards long term sustainable employment and furthermore, the attributes, qualifications and personal development that can be gained from sport will undoubtedly contribute towards job prospects in a wide range of disciplines.

According to the Sport NI; Economic Importance of Sport in Northern Ireland report, sport and associated industries are estimated to employ 17,900 people in Northern Ireland, accounting for 2.3% of all employment in the region in 2008. This figure represents a 12% increase since 2004 so in today's climate, the actual number and percentage is most likely to have increased.

Sport also has the power to develop many aspects of personal development, including education, and through initiatives such as coach education and sports leadership programmes linked with local Clubs and the infrastructure at a local level, the impact on people regarding their employability prospects would be significant.

A key consideration as part of the T: BUC Strategy should be the potential for capital investment in shared sporting venues in strategic places across Northern Ireland.

With investment from the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure into the Stadia Redevelopment Project, we have seen the impact capital investment can have on sport and the wider community.

A number of capital club projects have already seen considerable impact on the wider community and indicated the addition of updated/additional facilities have opened access and transformed the perception of the sports clubs to the surrounding community.

11. Partnership (Ulster Rugby, GAA & IFA)

The three major sports governing bodies have been working in partnership on a number of programmes such as the 'Sport in the Community' Programme (DSD Funded) and the Game of Three Halves, the Belfast Interface Games (Peace III Funded) and the 'Promoting Equality, Tackling Poverty and Social Exclusion through Sport' Programme (DCAL Funded).

The three codes are committed to working together on programmes that have the potential to have significant impact on wider social issues. As part of the growing relationship across the three sports, collaborative projects have focused on promoting good relations and diversity through capacity building among clubs and volunteers at a grassroots level.
The partnership between the three Associations has provided an interesting learning experience over the last two years in particular, as part of the DSD funded 'Sport in the Community' Programme. It was clear from the outset that the reach and impact of the three codes in areas such as capacity building, community development, and good relations through sport was significant.

Whilst the codes are in a strong position to further develop their capacity building work for instance with clubs and volunteers across Northern

Ireland, the Associations have learnt that they differentiate in some ways for example, their structures and developmental stages.

The three codes have gained much experience of working in partnership with other stakeholders in developing good relations programmes that have defined targets and outcomes relating to shared actions, joint up working and inclusion as well as providing directed programmes in areas of high social need that promote equality, tackle poverty and social exclusion.

Each Association has their strengths and challenges with regards to delivering programmes around capacity building, good relations and community development. The Irish Football Association has a wealth of experience in good relations and diversity programmes, using football as the vehicle for social change, which is evident through their internationally recognised 'Football for All' project.

Ulster GAA has a strong delivery in the area of Club Development and Community Outreach, educating volunteers and providing outreach education to provide an open and welcoming environment for the entire community. Participation projects such as the Cúchulainn Project; establishing links with female codes and providing GAA playing opportunities for all who wish to partake.

The IRFU (Ulster Branch) has considerable experience in areas of Grassroots Rugby Development, providing opportunities for player, coach and volunteer pathways. In recent years the IRFU (Ulster Branch) has developed robust participation programmes focused on growing the game with underrepresented groups, specifically with females, people with disabilities and people from areas of deprivation. As well as this, through the redevelopment of the Kingspan Stadium the Nevin Spence Education Centre is leading the way through an innovative approach to education and learning.

This learning has brought a great deal of value to the multisport partnership of three codes and has strengthened their position for future delivery, in how they meet Programme for Government, government department objectives and the priorities outlined as part of the T:BUC Strategy.

12. Cross Stadia Programme (IFA, IRFU Ulster Branch, Ulster GAA)

As part of the redevelopment of the Kingspan Stadium, Windsor Park and Casement Park there is significant potential to deliver a cross-stadia sport & education programme that provides synergy to the capital investment from DCAL.

Each stadium will host an education centre where people will be able to engage in education through a sporting lens, with a particular focus on STEM subjects. This provides an excellent opportunity for students to discover the potential for sport to integrate with education as well as providing a shared

space to explore the culture of each sport in a safe and respectful environment.

It is recommended that a Cross-Stadia Programme between the Kingspan Stadium, Windsor Park and Casement Park be considered as part of the delivery of the T: BUC Strategy, particularly in relation to the Shared Community and Cultural Expression themes.

12.1. Kingspan Stadium

A significant investment by DCAL into the Stadia Redevelopment Programme enabled the IRFU (Ulster Branch) to construct a state of the art stadium at Ravenhill Grounds with a capacity of approximately 18,000.

An important element of the redevelopment is increasing community access to the stadium and working towards the vision set out in the Northern Ireland Regional Development Strategy that Belfast will be a "City of Culture & Sport" by 2025.

Through community engagement and education programmes the stadium acts as a shared space where people can access rugby and help improve deprivation.

The stadium acts as a place to inspire people to participate in sport (rugby), which is at the core of DCAL's Strategy for Sport and Sport NI's Corporate Plan. The stadium is fully accessible and aims to promote equality and tackle social exclusion through sport.

12.2. Casement Park

The Ulster GAA Stadium Project Board have worked closely with their Design Team to produce impressive plans which will transform the current 12-acre Casement Park stadium site in West Belfast into an iconic stadium for all Ulster Gaelic Games, increasing the capacity of the stadium from its current figure of 32,500 to a 38,000 all seater. All GAA codes and activities will be catered for in the modern stadium to include Hurling, Camogie, Gaelic Football, Rounders, and Handball. The new building will also offer up to 2000sq metres dedicated to community facilities.

The stadium, as well as servicing needs of the Central GAA and Ulster GAA will also continue to serve all the needs of Antrim GAA as the County's home ground and will provide for all codes at all age levels. The aspiration of Ulster GAA is to have all school children with an interest in Gaelic Games play in the new stadium within five years of its completion. It is anticipated that this major Project will bring many benefits and opportunities for the local area and for Belfast and Ulster. When

completed the Stadium will bring significant local economic benefits, through job opportunities and by attracting visitors from across Ireland and these islands to Ulster and Belfast.

12.3. National Stadium: Windsor Park

The Association has a once in a generation opportunity to transform its stadia over the next five years. The £29.2m re-development of Windsor Park into a state of the art 18,000 seat National Stadium will be more than a new ground for the national team.

It will be a new home for the Irish FA; a new conference facility for the city of Belfast; and provide new social and recreational facilities to local communities.

We hope that its construction symbolises a continuing confidence in a new Northern Ireland, and in turn inspires growing confidence and support for our team.

A further £36.2m investment is planned to develop sub-regional facilities for the benefit of both the international and domestic game. By improving and upgrading facilities across Northern Ireland, we will provide better environments to develop our players and improve the facilities for fans and supporters who come to watch the game.

In total, the NI Executive through the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has committed £61.4 million of capital funding for football stadia and facilities. The Irish FA is committing a further £4 million (14% of the total stadium project costs), and we aim to attract further investment partners both at the new National Stadium, and for regional facilities. The preparation, planning and execution of this work must be carried out with immense care and thought to ensure that the maximum benefit is gained from this investment. With careful thought and willing partnerships we can deliver a revitalised physical infrastructure for football, inextricably linked to local community development in Northern Ireland.

Plans for the new National Stadium are now complete, and work has already begun. We plan to welcome fans and new supporters to the refurbished home of Northern Irish football in summer 2015. We have completed a Community Consultation Process which together with further engagement will shape our plans for community facilities at the stadium. Through partnership we will be able to offer a community space, GP surgery, or additional sports and leisure facilities to meet the needs of the surrounding neighbourhoods and kick-start renewal.

The Irish FA will be headquartered at the new stadium. Having all of our staff in a modern, fit for purpose building will be a huge boost to our teamwork ethic and will improve our ways of working.

A new management company has been created, as a subsidiary of the Irish FA, to run the new National Stadium and ensure its long-term sustainability as a venue, conference centre and museum from 2013. It will take operational control of the stadium's commercial and community facilities upon opening in 2015.

13. Conclusion

To conclude we welcome the opportunity to response to the T: BUC Inquiry and make recommendations to the future delivery of the strategy.

There is a clear willingness for the three codes to deliver joint initiatives that will result in a major impact on the Northern Ireland Society. The T: BUC Strategy presents a key opportunity for the three codes to enhance the good work that is currently being delivered in the area of Good Relations. With the capacity to deliver effective and successful programmes across Northern Ireland, the three Governing Bodies are well placed to act as core delivery partners for sport in the implementation of T: BUC Programmes.

Creating new opportunities and increasing inclusivity is central to the strategic direction of the three sports. This is an area that we hold considerable experience and can demonstrate a number of methods of best practise.

We also welcome the opportunity to present the comments and recommendations outlined in this joint Inquiry Response to the OFMDFM Committee.

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Glencree Women's Programme

Karen Jardine
Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister
And Deputy First Minister
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

7th October 2014

Dear Karen

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.
Inquiry into Building a United Community

We are a diverse group of women from working class areas across Northern Ireland i.e. Greater Shankill, North, East and South Belfast, Derry/Londonderry and Newry, Co. Down.

Evidence Base

We have been working together, sharing experiences and learning from and with one another as part of the Glencree Women's Programme.
We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community.
We have chosen only to respond to the terms of reference which are relevant to the dialogue processes we have undertaken and these have been focussed on sharing, learning and building understanding of one another's needs in relation to developing good relations. In these extended conversations we have taken time to unpack many of the issues which continue to divide our people and in a spirit of generosity agreed on the main areas of concern for all of us, our children and grandchildren and now wish to share our suggestions for moving forward together.

The Challenges to Good Relations

During our dialogue sessions we were introduced to the Government's strategy document "Together: Building a United Community" and read together the Ministerial Forward, signed by both ministers. We then read the Executive Summary and discussed the key priorities:
The Strategy outlines how Government, community and individuals will work together to build a united community and achieve change against the following key priorities:

1. Our children and young people
2. Our shared community
3. Our safe community; and
4. Our cultural expression

The Long Term Vision – A United Community

To assist our ability to look at developing good relations in a step by step process, we then agreed to vision what a truly united, integrated society would look like and prioritised the following as long term goals:

Education

One fully inclusive, planned, shared education system from pre-school, through primary, post-primary, college, university to life- long learning opportunities where the mix re diversity in each centre of learning would be approx. 40/40/20 percent i.e. 40% Protestant/Unionist, 40% Catholic/Nationalist and 20% new peoples making their homes here.

Social Housing

That all new public housing areas would have sharing at their heart and again allocation would be made on the same 40/40/20 percent basis acknowledging the reality of more mixed religion/culture families in today's society and the need to end division, segregated living and the fear of one another which resulted from deeply divided housing areas.

Cultural Celebration

We agreed that all cultural events funded from the public purse would ensure a welcoming, inclusive, non-triumphalist, planned, and shared ethos and implementation.

Community

We felt that any future applications for funding of community/women's/youth/sporting centres/initiatives should only be successful if they could demonstrate that they were planned and implemented as fully shared places and spaces and that existing separate facilities/initiatives should be financially incentivised towards mergers and sharing.

We added the following as the positive outcomes of the above:

Ease with difference
Celebration of cultural differences
Support for mixed relationships of all kinds
Sense of belonging for all
Good management of immigration
Shared community facilities the norm
Quality, inclusive, affordable childcare
Fully integrated education and housing
Politicians of all shades and community working together

The Reality of Today - The Challenges

To get a baseline of where we are now we shared what we see as the real challenges we as women from working class communities face today. These are as follows:

- The very real fear that persists both within and across communities and makes it very difficult for women in particular to raise their heads above the parapet and speak out.
- The power struggles at the heart of communities. The continuing reality of local gatekeepers who still dictate the level and pace of change.
- The political stalemate and lack of vision around a future that is truly shared. We often hear good words but find that very few of these words result in positive action.
- The lack of political leadership and risk averse politicians which is paralysing and it seemed it was always the same people, saying the same things with nothing new to offer a community hungry for positive and inclusive moving forward.
- The level of division which sees such a high proportion of housing and educational facilities divided.
- The reality of many more mixed relationships amongst our children and grandchildren and how the high segregation here leaves little room for this growing trend.
- The worrying resentment towards migrant workers
- The continuing and in some areas evidence of new interface barriers which in reality help people on both sides to feel safe in their homes in the current atmosphere of fear and lack of understanding.

- The lack of implementation of many areas of the Good Friday/ Belfast Agreement, sixteen years after it was passed at referendum. We feel that politicians are selecting areas of the Agreement which suit their own political ideologies and ignoring or interpreting areas of the Agreement to fit their own agendas. We are concerned that the spirit of generosity and compromise envisaged by the broad range of politicians who created this international Agreement and "commended" it to the people at referendum is being lost and in particular are very disappointed that the Civic Forum, the vehicle included to ensure engagement with civic society in all areas of peacebuilding has not been re-instated. This would certainly help women to engage and we feel the voice of women has been ignored by many politicians in recent years.

"Breakthroughs" – Our Ideas Around Initial Steps Towards Building a United Community

We are very clear on the issues requiring priority and urgent action in our communities.

These are:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Housing – more focus needed on creating mixed housing areas, attractive, welcoming and supported. Pilot more schemes based on learning from the challenges of the past in this area.
- Education including community education
- Dealing with all paramilitary activity, racketeering and drug dealing.
- Opportunities through dialogue, storytelling, sharing opportunities of all kinds to build understanding of one another, dispel myths, challenge stereotypes and create a sense of belonging and respect for all. This will include working with the new challenges immigration brings.
- Creating cultural harmony, even around the flying of flags and other contentious issues. Cultural expression shouldn't be about marking out territory of creating fear.

We found it very interesting that the intensive dialogue we had engaged in had not included any in-depth discussions on the current divisive and contentious issues of flags, parades and the past. We felt that these are red herrings that enabled the focus to be removed from the bread and butter issues that communities are most interested in. We do feel that the issues of the past would be best served by revisiting the recommendations made at the end of the Eames Bradley process.

Integration in Northern Ireland needs strong leadership and we feel the present situation contributes to inconsistent and ambiguous policies that hints at the fact that the status quo will remain as long as violence continues. We feel that the Agreement gave politicians a mandate that they are long overdue in fulfilling to enable Northern Ireland to enjoy a fully functioning, inclusive democracy.

We hope that you find our comments helpful. We would be very keen to meet with the Committee to provide oral evidence and to further elaborate on the issues we raise and our suggestions re moving forward.

Yours sincerely,

Mary Kelly – North Belfast
Irene Williamson – East Belfast
Roberta Gray - Greater Shankill
Donna McIlroy – Greater Shankill
Megan Lewis – Belfast 8
Kay Smith - Newry
Marie Gillespie – Derry/Londonderry
Theresa Holmes – Derry/Londonderry
Patricia Quigley – Derry/Londonderry
Maisie Crawford – Derry/Londonderry
Margaret Irvine – Derry/Londonderry
Siobhan Brinkley – Derry/Londonderry
Jennifer Doherty – Derry/Londonderry
Beth Neely – Derry/Londonderry

and Anne Carr

Dennis Golden

Dennis Golden

TOGETHER – BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

The disunited NI Executive has published a strategy document "Together: Building a United Community" which in its title and content is hypocritical, inconsistent, self-defeating and futile in that it fails to name and address the very division, and its fundamental cause, which disunites our community, and implicitly recognizes that the division will remain, however tolerant and respectful of "the other side" we might become. The strategy might result in a reluctantly "Shared Territory", but never in a "United Community". Like the "Good Friday Agreement", the strategy and document is an exercise in political pussyfooting.

If the political parties and individual politicians cannot lead by example by coming "Together" and demonstrating a "United" political/national identity, a "United" personal and party rejection and condemnation of religious bigotry and hatred, and demonstrate a common aspiration for the common good, how in all honesty can they claim to be "Together: Building a United Community" or ask the population to be so?

How can we possibly heal the religio-political division in Northern Ireland and form a united community when we have so many institutions, legitimate and otherwise, which reflect, exacerbate and perpetuate the division, and which rely on the division for their very existence?

We have the parading Orders, the marching bands, the paramilitary groups, the different Christian denominations, the separate school systems, the "We're Not Irish" ethnic identity movement, the opposing political parties, a disunited Assembly and a disunited Executive.

The document advocates tolerance and respect for the other's identity and viewpoint, but tolerance has its limits, and Protestantism, by definition, and in actuality for many in Northern Ireland, does not respect Roman Catholicism. Unionists do not tolerate the Republican aspiration for a united Ireland. Republicans do not tolerate perpetual union with Britain. Catholic tolerance of Protestant bigotry reached its limit with the Civil Rights Movement in 1968/69.

Do we want a bi-cultural, bi-political, two communities population forever at loggerheads over religious and national identity or do we want an integrated united community with a mutually accepted identity and a common aspiration for the common good?

A stable bi-cultural, bi-political, two communities population in the Northern Ireland context is a non-viable concept, and has been so from the inception of Northern Ireland. Even Edward Carson acknowledged this fact. So, short of ethnic cleansing or re-Partition and transference of populations, how do we now forge an integrated united community with a mutually accepted identity and common aspiration?

Firstly we must deal with the elephant in the room, the problem that is never addressed head on, no less so than in the strategy document, – the religious divide and the fact that Unionism/Loyalism is motivated by a form of Protestantism with a residual mediaeval anti-Catholic ethos institutionalized in the British monarchy. The monarchy can thus be added to the list of divisive institutions.

Noticeably, the churches have not been included in any of the initiatives proposed in the document. Was it politically dangerous to ask the churches to come "Together" and "Build a United Church/Community"? Did the politicians and their parties fear that they would lose their mandates if such unity came about? Or

was it perhaps considered to be futile? Why have the custodians of religious difference, the church leaders, never come together of their own volition? Has Jesus (if he ever in fact existed) been eclipsed by Christianity in its many forms?

If our united community is to be based on and guided by Christian values and principles we need a clear definition, and common understanding and acceptance, of those values and principles. To define those values and principles, and to educate the population in them, we need a common form of Christianity combining the best in Catholicism with the best in Protestantism, and the best in other religions with similar values and principles which have a significant adherence in Northern Ireland.

So Churchmen, get off your backsides, throw off your denominational straitjackets, put your heads together and do the Christian, social and morally responsible thing. Distil your denominations to their basic common values and principles and produce a commonly acceptable form of Christianity (Reformation 2). Surely with the help of "God" that is possible, if there is a "god". If "God" declines to help you must do it yourselves. If there is no "god" we need neither Catholicism nor Protestantism nor any other religion. We need a commonly agreed social moral code. Perhaps you should consider re-interring Christ and resurrecting Jesus who, in his lifetime (if he ever in fact existed), provided such a code in very few words before he was posthumously christified and deified by Paul and his gospel writer associates (simple Jesuanity rather than Christianity with its contentious interpretations and forms).

With the religious difference removed, the divisive institutions become irrelevant and unnecessary and the political question becomes less fraught. Union with Britain and its Protestant constitution becomes less of an imperative for erstwhile Protestants /Unionists/Loyalists, while reunification with the now less Catholic

South becomes less pressing for erstwhile Catholics, now no longer a downtrodden and barely tolerated minority in a Protestant statelet.

An aspiration for a united Ireland might of course remain in some quarters, but the vast majority, now an integrated, united, non-sectarian community, could choose on practical, non-emotive issues whether to remain with the UK, or to seek union with the Republic, or to be independent of both. Extremists on both sides of the divide, and their religious and political representatives, fear such a harmonious scenario. They, together with institutions and other vested interests, will do their utmost to impede and prevent it coming into being.

Given the Republic's current disaffection with the institutional Roman church, people there might welcome and adopt a rationalized form of religion, or a social moral code, thereby removing an emotive obstacle to integration with the North. It remains to be seen if possible changes which might be introduced by the new Pope Francis might help to bridge the Catholic-Protestant divide.

Meanwhile, the process of serious and effective religious and social reconciliation and integration should be started here and now, with or without "God's" help.

With "God's" help, pigs, and elephants, might fly.

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Holywell Trust, Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction

Holywell Trust, Peace & Reconciliation Group and The Junction Response to Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community

This paper was informed through engagement with the wider community at two sessions (23rd September & 1st October) and with representatives from each organisation.

About Our Organisations

1. Holywell Trust exists to facilitate understanding and healing, and sees itself as being at the heart of the social regeneration of the walled city. Holywell Trust is the lead partner of the DiverseCity Community Partnership, a collective of 10 organisations that have recently opened a new purpose built community building in the centre of Derry/Londonderry. The Partnership is working towards establishing our city centre as a truly diverse space.

2. Peace & Reconciliation Group has as its mission to promote and develop understanding and co-operation within and between individuals, communities and organisations. The PRG works towards this mission through a series of projects, the delivery of training and the facilitation of mediation.

3. The Junction is a community relations and peace building initiative set up to address issues of ongoing concern that are barriers to peace and a shared future. Among the projects that The Junction has developed and leads up are Ethical and Shared Remembering (concerned with a decade of violence and change 1912-1922 using the distant past as a prism to unpack the more recent conflict and violence of recent troubles), Towards Understanding & Healing (an organisation that recognises and validates individual experience in the context of the much wider story of the conflict in Northern Ireland and across these islands) and, City of Sanctuary (developing the city as a place where individuals and groups feel welcome, safe and embraced, where culture and cultural diversity is enriched through sharing together).

Reflections on the Strategy

4. **Welcome** – we welcome the publication of the Together: Building a United Community (T: BUC) strategy. The overall vision outlined in the document is clear and describes a society that our organisations are working towards. We were disappointed that, in our opinion, the headline priorities fall somewhat short in helping to achieve the vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation'.

5. **Resourcing** – we are concerned that there are no resources mentioned throughout the T: BUC document. A government strategy without ring-fenced resources is often no more than an aspirational document. The commitment of resources would reinforce government's commitment to addressing the important issues within the document.

6. **Timeframes** – we were surprised to note that the document only contains three actions that have defined timelines, one of which (review and consult on the Good Relations indicators by the end of 2013) has already passed unachieved. Essential to the success of achieving targets is to set realistic timeframes aligned to dedicated budgets – this is core to any strategy.

7. **Connection with Programme for Government** – the current Programme for Government, to which this strategy is tied, is currently due to expire in March 2015. This inquiry is due to overrun this time period raising questions on the change that may result.

8. **Development of Strategy** – we were frustrated with the lack of engagement with the wider community in the development of the strategy. As a result there is an obvious disconnect between the strategy and community relations practice in local communities. The important

work of community relations organisations and practitioners is undervalued throughout the document which is overly focused on delivery at the departmental level.

9. **Definition** – whilst several key themes, e.g. reconciliation, good relations and diversity, are all mentioned in the document there is a need for these to be clearly defined to the highest international standards. This will support the monitoring and evaluation of progress against each and allow for best practice to be shared internationally. In addition the underpinning principles would also benefit from further definition within our wider societal context, e.g. if we are to have interdependence as an underlying principle what is meant by this, what does it look like in practice?

10. **Reconciliation** – whilst reconciliation is highlighted as a key concern of the strategy little detail is given on how this is likely to be achieved or how issues arising from the past are going to be addressed. The reference to the establishment of an all party group to address issues from the past does not inspire confidence as elected representatives have generally avoided dealing with these challenging issues in a constructive manner – the issues continue to stunt the development of relationships and effective governance.

11. **Political Leadership** – within the strategy political leadership is highlighted as key to the successful implementation of the strategy. This remains a challenge to the full implementation of the strategy as there does not seem to be a strong political commitment to achieving the vision contained within this document as evidenced by the current need for further political talks.

12. **Legislative Change** – broadening the remit of key organisations such as the Community Relations Council and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland will require a legislative change to Section 75. We are concerned that this legislative change may impact adversely on both the equality duty and on good relations work and commitments of public bodies. Our concern is that the promotion of good relations may be reduced to a tick-box exercise rather than a core function.

13. **Community Relations Council** – the strategy recommends that this independent charitable organisation is folded into the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. We feel that the strategy is reaching beyond its remit to directly impact on an independent organisation. The Community Relations Council is a valued and vital organisation in the promotion and delivery of good relations work throughout Northern Ireland, an organisation that the sector support and want sustained. The Community Relations Council currently help to support the co-ordination of good relations activity throughout Northern Ireland – a function that should be sustained.

14. **Interface Challenges** – the target of removing physical barriers between communities is welcome. However, by focusing on the physical element of interfaces without addressing the psychological challenges is potentially damaging.

15. **Limited Actions & Existing Priorities** – the actions contained within the document seem to reflect existing priorities within government departments repackaged as good relations activity. There are few new initiatives within the document or actions that reflect on the current best practice within the community and voluntary sector.

16. **Implementation** – limited detail is given on how the strategy will be rolled out. Departmental action plans are mentioned but progress against these is far from obvious. Community relations practitioners, who have significant experience in the developing and delivery of good relations activities, are entirely absent from any implementation process within the strategy.

Recommendations

17. **Leadership** – there is a need for good relations champions within government departments and the political sphere. These champions should have the power and influence to affect change and create meaningful connections and relationships with practitioners working at the

local level. At present there is a dearth of, but appetite for, inspiration – real leadership that can result in encouraging positive change.

18. **Resources** – finances need to be clearly identified for the delivery of good relations activities within each government department. This should also include resources to directly sustain community relations practice within the community and voluntary sector. How resources are distributed should also be open and transparent and the impact of projects subject to monitoring and evaluation.

19. **Ambition** – the headline priorities and actions contained within this strategy need to be more ambitious. This type of strategy is trying to create a society that is some distance from our current reality. The achievement of the vision set within this strategy will take a long-term strategy using a range of approaches – a robust strategy that is informed by but looks beyond Programme for Government timeframes.

20. **Integrated Education** – how we educate our children needs to be transformed so that meeting someone from a different community or ethnic background is the norm rather than the exception. We cannot continue to be brought up apart. We cannot continue to sustain institutionalised division. We are not serving the needs of our children or society as a whole. In our opinion, the best way to educate our children is through one fully integrated system. This needs reflected in this and any future strategy of this nature.

21. **Focus on Youth** – there is a continued need to focus on young people, to capture their energy for the creation of a new, shared society. Programmes should continue to be targeted at all young people. However, it is also vitally important that the issues arising from the conflict are addressed by wider society. Important, often divisive issues, cannot simply be left unaddressed in the hope that young people will not be burdened by them.

22. **Engagement with Wider Community** – the Civic Forum should be revisited and refreshed with a view to being a key vehicle in formulating approaches to dealing with difficult issues. A functioning and effective forum could provide the support and guidance required to help government and political leaders to address challenging issues in a positive manner.

Oral Evidence

23. Representatives from our organisations would welcome the opportunity to give oral evidence to the committee.

October 2014

Engagement Details

24. 23rd September – engagement was carried out through the Conversation Space programme delivered by Holywell Trust. The event was attended by:

- Eamonn Baker (Towards Understanding & Healing)
- James Greer (Europa Acadamé)
- Jill Tellez (Europa Acadamé)
- Seamus Farrell (The Junction)
- Dr. Inder Pal Singh
- Linda Morgan
- Maureen Hetherington (The Junction)
- Lisa Wilkinson
- Michael Doherty (Peace & Reconciliation Group)
- Dennis Golden

25. 1st October – a workshop to inform this joint response to the inquiry was held as part of the Garden of Reflection Lunchtime Event programme. This session was attended by:

- Carol Wright (Towards Understanding & Healing)
- Richie Hetherington (The Junction)
- Kevin Burns (The Junction)
- Marjorie Baker (Garden of Reflection)
- Gerry Sharkey (Pink Panthers)
- Bornach Sharkey
- Nuala Crilly (North West Community Network)
- Gemma Harkin (Holywell Trust)
- Neola Nelis McCrossan (North West Community Network)
- Linda Nash (BSMC)
- B Doherty (BSMC)
- Flavio Oboti
- Owen Donnelly (Peace & Reconciliation Group)
- Colin Devine (North West Community Network)
- A Lucrak (NICEM North West)
- Jenny McClelland (Derry City Council)
- Carol Stewart (Derry City Council)
- Lisa Clements (Holywell Trust)
- Roisin O'Hagan (Holywell Consultancy)
- Lynne Edgar
- Colm Cavanagh (Foyle Trust for Integrated Education)
- Ursula Birthistle
- Denis McLaughlin (Customised Training Services)
- Matt Jennings (University of Ulster)
- Vincent Coyle
- Zach Jones (Peace Walls Project)
- Julia Fair (Peace & Reconciliation Group)
- Rebecca Carroll (The Junction)
- Lisa Anderson (Culturlann)
- Dr. Inder Pal Singh
- Kate Nash (Bloody Sunday March Committee)
- John McCormack
- Frank Cary (St. Columb's Park House)
- John Lindsay
- Charlotte Gordon
- Dennis Golden
- Anneliese Gregg
- Kirsten Arbuckle (Peace Walls Project)

Institute for Research in Social Sciences - University of Ulster

University of ULSTER

Faculty of Social Sciences

Submission to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Dr. Duncan Morrow, Dr. Jonny Byrne, Professor Cathy Gormley-Heenan and Dr. Brendan Sturgeon
(University of Ulster)

Contact Details:

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Introduction

This evidence submitted to the OFMDFM Inquiry into Building a United Community is drawn from our previous academic research which considered public attitudes around peace walls and interfaces (Byrne, Gormley-Heenan, and Robinson, 2012) and is also informed by our current knowledge exchange activities and research, funded by the Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) in partnership with the Department of Justice (DoJ). This knowledge exchange work considers a range of issues related to the NI Executive's peace wall strategy contained within the *Together: Building a United Community* document (May 2013).

We are very grateful for the opportunity to respond to the consultation. Against the background of our current ESRC project, our response will focus on one key aspect of the Terms of Reference put forward by the *Inquiry into Building a United Community* (2014): '**Seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed**.'

1) Background

1.1 The first 'peace wall' was built in 1969 to separate the Catholic Falls Road and the Protestant Shankill Road in Belfast. A British Army Major, overseeing the construction of the wall at the time, said: '*This is a temporary measure… we do not want to see another Berlin wall situation in Western Europe… it will be gone by Christmas'*.

1.2 In 2014, this peace wall still remains and almost 100 additional walls, barriers and other such interfaces join the original, stretching more than 26 miles in length across Belfast alone. Twenty years after the first paramilitary ceasefires and 16 years after the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement it has still not been possible to remove these structures in any systematic way, usually on grounds that the security of residents in the immediate vicinity would be put at risk. In many ways then, the 'peace walls' have come to symbolize the ongoing gulf between the aspirations of the peace process and the implementation of peace in practice.

1.3 Before 2012, the devolved government in Northern Ireland had no substantive baseline evidence of public attitudes towards the peace walls and barriers that cluster in the towns and cities of this region. Given the significance of peace walls as a policy priority in post-conflict Northern Ireland, we believed that understanding public attitudes about peace walls was necessary and developed a public attitudes survey to gather this data (Byrne, Gormley-Heenan & Robinson, 2012).

1.4 Carried out in March and April 2012, the survey gathered quantitative data, which highlighted how those living in closest proximity to the walls and barriers felt about their physical landscape; what they knew (if anything) about the different initiatives that the devolved and local government were developing; and what they hoped for in future. This research suggested that a number of factors needed to be taken into account in order to progress the issue of peace walls from any agreed policy *objective* to an *implemented* policy. The primary challenge for policy makers would be reconciling the mixed messages of fear and optimism revealed within our survey of local residents views, as well as using the results to act as the stimulus for the creation of conditions, to allow for the successful implementation of both devolved government and local authority policies.

1.5 The research highlighted six key factors that could underpin the eventual implementation of a peace walls policy:

a. There is a need to improve methods of sharing information, alongside the need to undertake further community consultations with those who reside closest to the peace walls;
b. There is a need to extend meaningful co-operation and engagement between and across communities divided by peace walls;
c. Outstanding security concerns still prevalent within communities must be addressed;
d. There should be greater emphasis on 'encouraging the imagination' around what the landscape might look like post peace walls;
e. This issue must be treated as one requiring real 'joined-up' government, with real co-operation between the various government departments with responsibilities for security, social development, the economy and the environment.
f. The policy framework around peace walls needs to be clearer about those various stakeholders who should be included in the agenda setting and decision-making part of future processes. To reduce their roles to that of 'street level bureaucrats' tasked with the implementation of policy decisions taken at a more macro level runs the potential risks of undermining any implementation process (Gormley-Heenan, Byrne & Robinson, 2013).

2) Key Issues Today

2.1 There are a number of misconceptions and issues of confusion related to the *Together: Building a United Community* policy objective of the complete removal of all peace walls and barriers by 2023 through the implementation of a 10-year Programme, working together with the local communities. For instance, there seems to be an accepted public narrative that more peace walls have been built since the Good Friday Agreement (1998) than before. In fact, the total number of barriers has increased only slightly, but the rate of construction and proliferation has decreased markedly, especially since 2007. Furthermore there has been some progress in

removing barriers, softening their impact or increasing the degree of communication between communities.

2.2 The study compiled by members of our research team indicated that while 58% of residents living near the walls 'would like the peace walls to come down now or sometime in the future', 63% of those surveyed would still 'would like to know more about initiatives and discussions on the peace walls'. Moreover, the research indicated that governments have not yet managed to reassure communities living near the walls that they would not be negatively affected by the removal of the walls.

2.3 Two decades after formal ceasefires and 7 years since the establishment of devolution 69% of those surveyed feel that 'maintain(ing) that the peace walls are still necessary because of the potential for violence'. In addition, 58% of residents living in close proximity to the walls 'were very/fairly worried about the police ability to preserve peace and maintain order if the peace wall was removed.' This suggests either that level of fears between communities has not reduced sufficiently since the beginning of the peace process or that trauma in the past creates significant grounds for suspicion of anything which promotes integration. The multiple points of misunderstanding and uncertainty are exacerbated by the fact that 34% of 'peace wall residents' know little about policies related to the walls (Byrne, Gormley-Heenan & Robinson, 2012).

2.4 In the absence of clarity about the policy towards the removal of peace walls, we have, through our ESRC funded knowledge exchange activities, encountered widespread scepticism about the plausibility of their complete removal by 2023. **It is not clear what information and research was used in arriving at the target date as indicated in TBUC, nor what preparations have been made to ensure delivery.** Beyond uncertainty about the prospective target, **it remains unclear who would be responsible for the success or failure of the strategy, as the Department of Justice (DoJ), Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the communities themselves** (as they must agree) all appear to have duties in delivering the output.

2.5 Failure to achieve the ambitious TBUC target of having all peace walls removed by 2023 will have significant ramifications for the credibility and reputation of the Northern Ireland Executive. Internationally, the removal of peace walls is seen as emblematic of peace and progress in Northern Ireland. There is a substantial risk that failure to achieve or make significant progress towards the target will create the impression that the Executive is either unable or unwilling to act to reduce territorial segregation and enmity. In the domestic context, failure to achieve the target is likely to be accompanied by ongoing evidence of concentrated deprivation in interface areas – with concerns that these areas have been left out of the wider benefits offered by the peace process in Northern Ireland.

2.6 Within Northern Ireland, the impact on the communities targeted by the strategy (where the walls reside) could be significant if it were to fail, as the communities could be psychologically damaged by an unsuccessful process. A number of areas have developed a reliance on their respective walls (seeing them as their last

physical symbol of protection from their 'opposing' community) – as a consequence, failure to complete the process after the community has agreed to be part of the strategy could understandably be harmful.

2.7 We would suggest that the simplicity of the target may, itself, be misleading. Although the removal of walls is a critical and highly visible aspect of the emergence of a 'normal' western society, it should be understood as an output in the journey towards this wider target rather than a specific goal in itself. As of now, we are unaware of any significant measureable indices to ascertain progress towards the outcome of a safer, fairer and more peaceful society. The single-minded focus on physical barriers creates a number of significant policy risks:

a. There is insufficient emphasis on the requirement to generate significant social and economic change to achieve the wider target,

b. There is no mechanism to allow for a staged approach which takes account of very different local circumstances (with the progress in some areas likely to be slower than in others).

c. There is no mechanism to allow for a graduated response to changing local circumstances or the distinctive nature of the relationship between each community and their respective wall.

2.8 On the basis of our research, and give the enormous public interest in this issue we propose that:

a. The target of removing walls should be set within a wider framework of improving safety and supporting regeneration.

b. Within three years, a clear strategy for implementation of the goal should be published for full consultation and engagement with community, political and other stakeholders.

c. As part of that strategy, clear structure for delivery of the target should be established which clarifies responsibilities across Executive Departments and makes clear how community organisations and other statutory agencies will contribute to the outcome.

d. The resources that are required and available to deliver the target, should be explicitly identified and planned for.

e. A clear framework for monitoring and evaluation should be established which enables public accountability for progress and enables an open communication about opportunities, risks and challenges.

3) Critical Success Factors

3.1 Consistent and sustained political leadership is essential if this target is to be achieved. As this policy is the agreed policy of the whole Executive, it is important that the target has the active support of all of the political parties and the active engagement of local representatives of the parties. Furthermore, there needs to be

evidence that all Departments and relevant agencies are fully signed up both to the target and to the resources required to achieve the target.

3.2 Close working relationships with local partners and representatives will be essential to identify and address emerging issues and concerns in creating and sustaining the cohesion necessary to deal with the challenges that this type of strategy will likely create.

3.3 Sufficient resources will be required to ensure that the different agencies and groups involved are able to meet their obligations, including public safety, regeneration and reimaging. It is very important that statutory bodies have the capacity to interact with areas where there is ongoing evidence of alienation from public authorities. The police continue to face challenges in achieving cooperation and support in some areas, but negative perceptions in some communities of the PSNI can be adjusted by the establishment of a consistent visible and reliable presence. However, this will require time and resources.

3.3 Credible policies and planning to promote good relations and regeneration processes and outcomes must be created and delivered. This includes creating formal good relations elements within community plans at local council level. This should just not be restricted to encouraging areas to have a greater acceptance of their longstanding 'opposing' community, but also be aimed at creating the type of environment that will create more plurality, communication and connectivity between and within the traditional blocs.

3.4 Coherent and consistent inter-Departmental working is required to ensure that the target is connected to an improvement in community safety and quality of life – this includes creating a dynamic and durable connection between Social Development, Education, Employment and Learning, Culture Arts and Leisure and OFMDFM, under the leadership of DoJ.

3.5 High quality qualitative and quantitative research can offer detailed and timely information that can help steer the strategy in the appropriate direction, if properly connected in to the strategy's framework and should be both commissioned and then fully utilized.

3.6 Within three years, the Executive should publish an agreed and universally understood timescale to ensure that all stakeholders, including statutory agencies and community group, can understand their participation in this shared goal and will remain involved as well as committed and energized by the strategy until its full delivery in 2023.

We hope that you find these comments helpful. If you would like to discuss our response, or would like to find out more about our ESRC funded Knwledge Exchange activities in this area, we can be contacted using the details provided on the

coversheet. We would also be pleased to provide oral evidence to the Committee on this inquiry.

Dr. Duncan Morrow, Dr. Jonny Byrne, Professor Cathy Gormley-Heenan, Dr. Brendan Sturgeon

9 October 2014.

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Interaction Belfast

Dear Committee Members,

We are submitting this paper to you in the hope that we can contribute something to your discussions around the issue reviewing the government policy of TBUC. Interaction Belfast is conflict transformation organisation based on the Interface in North and West Belfast since 1988. We believe that our collective experience and those of the many people from both communities who we have worked with over the past 26 years may give us some insight into the issues of the review of TBUC.

We would also like to request an oral hearing with the committee with our CEO Roisin Mc Glone and joint Chairperson Harry Maguire.

Having been involved progressively in Inter-community work, Interface work, conflict resolution and laterally conflict transformation work our organisation passionately believes in the civic society approach to peace building and has consistently provided evidence as to the success of this approach in an area that was one of the most deeply divided communities in our society.

We believe that some of the lessons we have learned about trust building, reconciliation and the making and keeping of agreements are key aspects to making progress in peace-building.

Although we are primarily concerned with future progress for interface communities we believe that successes and lessons learned in the Interface Communities provide key indicators of possible success for our peace process. Parades, Flags and the Past have defined the issues at Interfaces and shaped life for those who live in their shadow. More importantly they are the places where things can go wrong and so Interfaces are the true testing and learning grounds for our wider peace process.

Roisin Mc Glone
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    - **Flags protocol**
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    - **Contested Space – Parades**

4. **Inclusive approaches to 'Policing with the Community'.**
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5. **Conclusion**

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1. Introduction

"Only governments can write peace treaties, but only human beings- citizens outside governments – can transform conflictual relationships between people into peaceful relationships" Harold Sanders

The issues of trust, peace building and are just some of the issues which are central to almost all 'peaceline' communities in Belfast and beyond. Interfaces have and continue to be the demarcation line between one community and the other and have in the past been the focus for sectarian violence and murder. This has cultivated a culture of fear and mistrust of those on the other side of the wall. For residents in these communities 'peace walls' are both central to their sense of security and well being and the source of stress on an ongoing basis due to their proximity to potential violence in times of raised tensions.

Those of us working in the sector of improving Community Relationships in divided communities, have for many years dispelled the myth that there is anything 'peaceful' about the walls that divide our communities. These walls were designed and built to keep warring communities apart and make people on either side feel safer, but these areas closest to Belfast's 26 'peace lines' are still the most likely to provide opportunities to unravel our peace process.

Interfaces (as we living and working prefer to refer to them) became synonymous with violence and the micro manifestations of the macro political war ongoing on this part of the island. The walls themselves are just a symptom of much deeper divisions across our society; their existence condenses the performance of violence into distinct space. Nonetheless there have been enormous strides in terms of our peace process, and our organisation has seen much improvement in terms of relationships between community representatives on the ground at interfaces.

In our own location, although we have seen much suffering and violence we are proud of the fact that the Springfield/Falls/Shankill interface is one of the most settled in Belfast. But be clear, we do not and must never be complacent about that. We believe we have put in place the building blocks to sustain robust working relationships between activists in both communities but we never take the relative peace for granted and continue to be diligent and reflect on our successes in order to be prepared for all eventualities.

Over the past 26 years we have responded to a number of challenges that have faced our communities. Through trial and error and by listening to the communities we work with, coupled with lessons and experiences from academics and practitioners from ours and other conflicts, we have developed a number of processes which has

enabled us to broker agreements which have sustained and contributed to the peaceful resolution to difficult challenges. These have included agreements and protocols around Flags, Parades, Policing and Community Safety, dealing with violence, and developing positive and robust relationships.

We want to detail our experience and the conditions in which we have inched toward progress over 20 years in the hope that it will encourage progress.

We believe strongly that not enough sustained effort has been made to build relationships at a leadership level within our peace process. We strongly believe the processes developed and the subsequent achievements of organisations like our own who have worked at a grass roots level has much to teach our political and cultural leaders. Good local leadership can change political and cultural landscapes. Structured dialogue is the answer. Communication leads to dialogue which leads to relationships being formed. In turn relationships lead to trust which leads to understanding and negotiation, agreement and synergy and ultimately success. Successful organisational change comes with careful attention to the process of change and not focussing solely on its intended results this is also true of societal change.

We also believe that if sustainable funding is not provided for this work to continue we will slip back into violence on Interfaces and more residents will drawn into violent extremism to solve issues and grievances.

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2. Our Conflict analysis and prevention strategy

Fear and Mistrust and memory

We do not offer our thoughts lightly, much of our progress and successes have been hard won. We in interface communities have suffered some of the worst of the violence in the past 40 years. Residents in these areas have had to suffer both in terms of being in the worst 20% of areas suffering multiple deprivation and carrying the burden of the legacy of our proximity too and ongoing potential for the violence of the troubles.

Interfaces which had been planned as temporary security measures became permanent structures. This had come about because of the many sectarian murders and to nightly attacks and riots.

The resultant fear and mistrust between communities on both sides was almost absolute, which in turn compounded the experience of those residents and communities living there. A key symptom of these experiences, in terms of interpreting the meaning and nature of interfaces, is that of memory. Interfaces are an endurable `aide-memoir' of harm done and of potential threat unstated.

The impact of these experiences of murders, violence and both the proximity to, and potential for violence, created communities filled with fear and mistrust. Later, after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement when stones or petrol bombs came across the walls, the community at the receiving end did not distinguish if the missiles came from a group of children or were paramilitary directed. So all attacks, no matter what their origin were perceived to be orchestrated attacks by, or on behalf of the 'other' community. This was compounded by the rumours that spread like wildfire across other interfaces the city. Where incidents could start life as a few stones being thrown across a wall, through mis- reporting of the story, fuelled by fear and siege mentality, they became stories of orchestrated attack of one community on another. Often these incidents would then escalate, resulting in both communities defending itself against attack by attacking the other. Often this would spread from one interface to many. This has resulted in Interface communities and residents symbolising the distinct and competing narratives so evident in wider society and our legacy of fear.

Peter Shirlow and Brendan Murtagh from the University of Ulster discovered that nearly 70 per cent of Troubles-related murders took place less than 500 yards from Interface barriers, which were meant to protect the rival communities from one and other, and that nearly 85 per cent of the killings in the conflict occurred within 1,000 yards of the walls and barriers. They also revealed that cases of intimidation in these

areas doubled from 56 to 108 between the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and 2001.

"Cultural and political differentiation is both significant and undeniable. ***Interfaces*** *are also a constant reminder of harm done and of threat implied. Their existence compacts the performance of violence* ***...*** *they present a script from which community loyalty can be read.* ***Interfaces*** *both divorce and regulate intercommunity relationships, and in so doing they compress space***"**

Shirlow records that the nearness of the killings to people's homes had created a population obsessed with the Troubles. *"The context of these barriers was supposed to be security and impede the capacity of killers to move between communities. What they became actually were markers indicating the "other side". Therefore you got a situation where it was easier to target the rival community."* He argued that interfaces still are the place where you are going to have violence and that continued sectarian separation was creating a 'Balkanised Belfast.' *"There is Balkanisation at present; in a benign way it could turn into ethnically-divided Belgium, or in a malign way towards the former Yugoslavia."*

In terms of dealing with the past Shirlow *comments "I think one of the reasons why you have discord is that these murders were burnt into the community's memory. But the memory is only exclusive to your own side. Violence on your doorstep leaves a lasting imprint. The geography of violence and its power of memory is still alive and keep segregation strong."*

So in this context Interaction Belfast believes that the work of dealing with the past must involve dealing with the legacy of our segregated communities and the inherent sectarianism in all its manifestations.

Building trust and making and keeping agreements in a divided society

It was the organisational view that the conflict was between two communities, states, and two ideologies over nationality and territory and that it was important not to blame either side for it, but to seek ways in which conflict could be positively addressed.

We confront and deal with the issues which divide our communities at the grass roots level in the day to day working of any community. Our aim is to improve the quality of life for those residents who have borne the brunt of the conflict for 40+ years. We have made much progress and would be considered one of the more stable Interfaces in the North. Our main weapons has been to build trust and develop mechanisms

where community representatives and communities make agreements and promises and hold each other to agreements and promises made.
We have also grounded our work in the framework of reconciliation. We see Reconciliation as the process of addressing conflictual and fractured relationships. We believe that reconciliation is a core issue for us living and belonging together and to that end we use a working definition of Reconciliation by Brandon Hamber and Grainne Kelly

The definition involves 5 strands –

1. Shared vision of an interdependent and fair society
2. Acknowledging and dealing with the past
3. Building positive relationships - building trust and confronting prejudice and intolerance
4. Significant cultural and attitudinal change
5. Substantial social economic and political change.

Reconciliation is not either a new concept or the property of our peace process.

In 1958 Hannah Arendt, French philosopher and holocaust survivor, details the implications for us living together and amongst other people – as meaning our lives to some extent are determined by what others do. Yet we also have the freedom to act, which can be self-serving or altruistic. She identified that we can only create our future *together* by making and keeping promises to each other.

She identifies two dilemmas associated with this which make us vulnerable;

1. Life is irreversible and cannot be replayed to change hurt or harm that has been caused to others.
2. Life is unpredictable and we cannot know with certainty either what is ahead of us or how others will fell or act toward us.

So both forgiveness and the making of promises to one another are essential to the building of relationships and so to reconciliation. The issue of forgiveness is a personal one and cannot be legislated for or in fact expected. But making and keeping promises to one another is a fundamental concept that we can work on daily.

In order that we can make and keep promises, (or what modernity would classify as agreements,) trust between parties is critical. Building trust after violent conflict between communities and between those communities and the state is neither easy nor apolitical.

Trust has been identified as a key element of successful conflict resolution. This is not surprising insofar as trust is associated with, enhanced cooperation, information

sharing, and problem solving**.** The political implications of trust were outlined by Onora O'Neill in the 2002 Reith lecture. O'Neill made her explicit focus on Northern Ireland as '*the exemplar of a society where relations of trust and mistrust have broad social significance'.* She constructs her argument around the relationship between mistrust, fear and terrorism and the potential of a resurgence of trust as a means of exiting a spiral of violence. Trust has to be built, and how do we build trust between individuals, communities and organisations? For O'Neill the answer to the problem of restoring trust is not to be found in the discourses of human rights and democracy but rather that these discourses as being reliant upon a basis of trust and not vice versa "*Trust engenders democracy rather than democracy providing trust."*

As an organisation our role is to facilitate difficult conversations with the aim of building trust between former enemies in order to impact on the political process, provide models of good practice thereby improving the quality of life for residents on Interface's.

Capacity building/dialogue

"Dialogue means we sit and talk with each other, especially those with whom we may think we have the greatest differences. However, talking together all too often means debating, discussing with a view to convincing the other, arguing for our point of view, examining pro's and con's. In dialogue, the intention is not to advocate but to inquire; not to argue but to explore; not to convince but to discover." -- Louise Diamond, the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

These two processes of trust and capacity building are linked because facets of capacity building help people approach dialogue with confidence and security. It is appreciated that different levels of dialogue will happen at different paces and that such dialogue will include issues of common ground, differences and difficulties. It is also accepted that such issues will be a blend of the local and big pictures.

The signing of the Good Friday Agreement opened up a whole new era for our organisation. We were faced with the prospect of the work we were doing becoming supported by political structures and championed by the political elites. But this new beginning didn't come quickly. We conducted a substantial consultation with 60 key groups along the interface in order to identity their current needs and how we needed to adjust our strategic planning. They identified that they wanted to focus on clearly identifying new approaches to inter- community conflict, analysis development and recording the work so as to identify best practice and build mature and sustainable relationships, and development robust mechanisms for everyday dialogue for former enemies. We have produced five research reports since that time, and have developed the following mechanisms/process.

We have been involved in and initiated a number of key trust building process's resulting in a number of mechanisms being developed where accountability has been central some of these initiatives, programmes and projects are detailed in the following section

3. <u>Sharing security Responsibility;- Case studies Interaction Belfast –</u>

De-escalation of violence - MPN

The Mobile Phone Network had been established in 1996 and was an innovative, organic project designed to address sectarian incidents and violence at interfaces. At its most active there were 28 phones distributed to a diverse group of voluntary community activists: representative of a range of ages, gender, and political differences.

Each is given a small card listing the numbers of the other phone holder and their geographical area of responsibility. When an incident occurred or violence broke out between communities, phone holders would contact each other across the interface in order to resolve the issues that had contributed to the outbreak.
De-escalation involves changes within each of the adversaries as well as new forms of interaction between them. In most cases, de-escalation does not occur until the parties have reached a prolonged stalemate in which both sides are being harmed by continuing the confrontation. Once the parties realize this, they are more likely to be willing to take part.

Springfield Inter - Community Forum

Emerging from our work on the de escalation of violence **SIF** was a network designed and facilitated by our organisation composed of 30 Community Activists from Community organisation along the Interface and who have a commitment to developing and sustaining relationships between activists, groups, and organizations on those interfaces in order to address contentious issues, community development, and quality of life issues.

Their work involved four core areas: Transforming relationships and resolving differences; reducing conflict and violence; exploring diversity; and increasing community capacity. This development came after the GFA when it was it was incumbent on us in civic society to develop mechanisms which would create the opportunities for activists and thereby communities to be able to make promises and to keep those promises as building blocks towards trust building and community development across the interfaces. So the forum became that mechanism. What these developments meant was that we could deal with both promise making and we could

build trust by that very keeping of promises. Nothing breaks trust more than promised being broken and by promises we mean agreements.

Specific Trust-building processes

In 2003 we were involved in the Kwa Maritane trust building process in South Africa which resulted in our organisation beginning its relationship with Brian Currin, who became an advisor to our organisation and is also an international human rights lawyer, a member of the Northern Ireland Sentence Review Board and an international expert on Conflict Transformation processes. In 2003 Brian came to Belfast and we run a trust building process between activists from both communities. We developed a week long trust building process from which we developed action plans to guide our work over the following two years. Known as the 'Farset Minute' we kept a running minute of the process and agree action plans which we revisited on a three monthly basis over the subsequent years. This process enabled numerous programmes and projects to develop out of the intense and honest discussions between activists from the two main communities in west Belfast Interfaces –some of which are detailed here.

Flags protocol

In the early 2007 we facilitated a process with key stakeholders to address the issues of the proliferation of flags, marking territory and intimidating on the interfaces. With the support of the stakeholders we supported the development of a flags protocol which has sustained to the present and which has left most of our interface flag free.

Interface violence/ incidents protocols

In 2006 we developed with both communities and the local district police a set of protocols for joint dealing with interface violence and incidents of intimidation.

Contested Space – Parades

"Orange parades are political rituals which reveal the nature of relations between Protestant and Catholic communities in Ireland. They also expose key political divisions within Unionism and the relationship of the Protestant community to the British state." Dominic Bryan **Orange Parades, the Politics of Ritual, Tradition and Control'**

Parades are an issue that is obviously central to so much else and requires more than local action. However, one of the local needs we identified was the need to stop violence on both sides of the parades dispute in order that the protagonists could have space to dialogue. We developed an intense conflict analysis on the basis of

consultation with all parties involved and offered a number of solutions some of which have been implemented. This conjunction with this the local residents group '5 point plan' has resulted in peaceful protests since 2003.With the exception to the parade of 2005 the parade has also been peaceful

4. <u>Inclusive approaches to 'Policing with the Community'.-Case study Interaction Belfast</u>

Policing In Partnership

Leading on from the Farset process a further trust building process was developed. This work started in 2004 with the acknowledgment that policing in both communities had a central role

A strategic 'Policing in Partnership' project was developed and run between 2007-2010.This process carried out with Brian Currin, was a trust-building process, between Republican and Loyalist activists and the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The project was initiated at a time when this type of work was so fraught with risk it had to remain confidential and funded from outside Ireland. The project which began with the senior management team in the West Belfast District Command Unit of the PSNI in 2004 named 'Managing Change' spread to work with all Police districts across the North, with specialist units within the PSNI engaging with senior Republican and Loyalists' representatives.

The 'Policing in Partnership' programme was implemented in June 2007, supported by and engaged with by the PSNI with the agreement of the Chief Constable, Sinn Fein's Policing and Justice Committee and the leadership of Northern Ireland's two main Loyalist groups. From June 2007 through to April 2008 the Policing in Partnership programme delivered a total of nine two day workshops to a total of one hundred and forty four senior managers in the PSNI from across the North ranging from Chief Superintendent to Chief Inspector and including management teams from the PSNI's tactical support units and senior Republican activists, including SF members of DPPs and the Policing and Justice sub group and separately with loyalists and the PSNI.

In addition to the original programme the team organised and facilitated three additional processes involving the Chief Constable's top team and Sinn Fein at Hillsborough Castle, the eight District Commanders and Sinn Fein's policing and justice sub group and finally a three day trust building programme involving senior managers from the eight PSNI District Command Units and Loyalist representatives from the PUP and UPRG at Wilton Park in England.

The PSNI's CARE forum which incorporates the RUC widows, Parents Association, RUC GC Association, Disabled Police Officers Association, Retired Police Officers Association and Police Federation after briefings fully supported the rationale and need for this type of engagement As the process has developed it became clear that much more work needs to be carried out at a grassroots level, although at a strategic level a great deal of progress has been made.

5. Conclusion

For those of us involved and working in Interaction Belfast we keep the following possibilities in mind; peace walls can be retained, replaced or removed. By not considering removal, in the range of hopes and possibilities, we have resigned ourselves to segregation.

We had hoped that success on the many other issues post Good Friday Agreement would ultimately make the walls redundant. That would be our vision, but the conditions are not right for communities to consider their full scale removal. For many outside these communities these walls appear a travesty, for us working alongside walled communities the complexities of the issues make their current state palatable in the short term to medium term. For us the recent building of new Interface walls is testament to the segregation in our communities and that segregation shapes our politics.

We have the solutions to our problems; the question is have we the will to implement them? These solutions center on dialogue and making and keeping agreements. In terms of Parades, dialogue between the key stakeholders at local and strategic level is critical. Some capacity building with some parties in parallel may be necessary.

In respect of flags- an implementable protocol must be developed from the grass roots up, with statutory agencies monitoring it and reflecting back to the grass roots.

The key to the issues of Flags and Parades is about looking forward and not back. Our experience would demonstrate that once participants have made that psychological leap, significant progress can be made as was seen in the action planning workshops in all of the trust-building processes we have developed.

Furthermore changes, which were initially seen as negative, are now highlighted as examples of how participants have changed and developed positively. Unless attitudes are addressed, conceptualised problems will occur in the future. Trust is vital to the success of parties in a democratic society, community outreach is essential for gaining trust.

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This lack of trust between the main political parties severely restricts the ability of the Stormont to implement policies. There is a history of negativity towards Republicans within the ranks of unionism, which is mirrored within Republicanism, these forms the greatest block to any progress. Building trust between republicans and unionists, and the community they serve is a core part of any democratic process.

This government TBUC strategy provided an excellent opportunity to develop and roll out a number of specifically designed 'awareness rising' 'peacebuilding' or trust building process between political, cultural and civic society leaders over a number of years, an opportunity which has not been grasped.

If this review of the strategy only looks at the gaps in the TBUC strategy then the OFMDFM committee also miss an opportunity to vision a reconciled society and suggest possible programmes and projects. There will be nothing beneficial in our representatives being part of a process that apportions blame or attempts to claim the higher moral ground.

Trust-building processes can be greatly enhanced at an early stage by the development and implementation of dedicated trust building and action planning processes between former enemies, which will expose and interrogate underlying prejudicial attitudes in a constructive and progressive manner and contribute to effective planning in the future.

In terms of our outstanding issues in our peace process, we must engage in dialogue which enables and encourages the protagonists to make agreements on what can be agreed. Build in processes to monitor these agreements. Appoint observers to oversee/monitor the development of agreements, whilst continuing to attempt to agree that which has not been agreed.

Develop processes for trust building over a range of issues and groups whilst building capacity of the parties

We must also frame all of this work in a structure and the language of reconciliation. The issues of dealing with the past has most rightly been framed around those who have lost loved ones or been injured in the conflict. The experience of groups working specifically with those people best informs the way forward. Our own experience is of traumatised communities and the inherent difficulties they face. We must continue to provide opportunities for residents in these divided communities to see the humanity in the 'other'.

We must also give them hope and you on the committee can be an exemplar of that. It is your responsibility to give us hope for the future.

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And finally to resources Interaction Belfast is not a large organisation. Over the years we have had limited funding and capacity and yet we are very proud of the work we have been involved in our innovative approach to peace-building – all of the work has been funded by the CRC, European Union Peace I and Peace II, the International Fund for Ireland, the Irish Government and the Joseph Rowntree Charitable foundation.

This funding has mainly been on 1 year contracts or short term project funding. We have never received mainstream funding from central government. As these funding sources leave the stage WHERE is the money coming from for us, as a society to continue our journey of Reconciliation? The TBUC strategy does not address this critical question. Long term, sustainable and supported programmes developed by grass roots organisations are a critical ingredient of peace-building in Interface communities and must be central to any government strategy for reconciliation. The expertise is out here, astute governments would use it, both in terms of financial prudence and in terms of effective progress in a divided society.

Roisin Mc Glone
10th October 2014

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Professor Colin Knox and Sarah McWilliams

Submission to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Colin Knox & Sarah McWilliams

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3rd September 2014

Background

This submission to the OFMDFM Inquiry into *Building a United Community* (T:BUC) outlines the evidence accrued from the *Contested Space/Interface Programme* as a way of learning from pre-existing initiatives which could help with the implementation of T:BUC. The premise of the submission is that there are projects which have been pilot tested and evidence gathered on a number of the core themes associated with T:BUC. So, rather than starting from scratch, the argument in this submission to is learn from existing work which has proved its effectiveness. We therefore outline the details of the Contested Space/Interface Programme, the findings from the evaluations of this programme, and how it can directly align with several of T:BUC's core themes. The authors of this submission are the evaluators of the *Contested Space/Interface Programme*.

Origins

The Contested Space/Interface Programme 2011-15 was launched by the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in March 2011. Its **key aim** is to promote and improve relations between and across disadvantaged contested space/interface communities. The programme provides these communities with opportunities to shape and influence how children and youth services are provided in a way that encourages reconciliation, increases participation of communities in policy making, and contributes to better outcomes for children, young people and families.

Funding and Eligibility

The programme has an original design in that it is **jointly funded** by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and the Atlantic Philanthropies (an external American based charitable foundation). It is a **£4 million four-year programme** in which **each funder makes a 50% contribution**.

To be eligible to participate in the programme, **groups had to form a consortium** which included at least one community organisation from each side of the contested space/ interface. Groups also had to be engaged in activities within the **top 20% of the most deprived wards** as measured by the 2010 multiple deprivation measures.

Focus

The programme focuses on four areas of support:

1. **Early years and parenting programmes** which concentrate on young people, children and parents living in contested space/interface communities.
2. **Shared space programmes targeted and delivered through schools** operating in contested space/interface communities.
3. **Interface youth engagement programmes aimed at young adults** including those not currently engaging with youth providers.
4. **Shared neighbourhood programmes targeted at families** living in contested space/interface communities.

Projects Funded

The Contested Space/Interface programme comprises **nine projects delivered in two phases**. The project budgets range from **£250,000, to £820,000**.

Phase 1 (March 2011 – June 2014)

1. **Achieving Personal Potential (APP)**: Led by Shankill Women's Centre with partner organisations which work in *Shankill/Carrickhill, Ballysillan/Ligoneil, Skegoneill/Glandore; and Whitewell/Whitecity*. The aim of the project is to provide opportunities for young people to build relationships through: team building activities, drama, music, personal development, arts and crafts, and educational homework and revision workshops.
2. **Active Respectful Communities (ARC):** Led by Community Relations in Schools (CRIS), the project works with children and parents from six schools in *Ardoyne and Shankill* communities (Holy Cross Nursery School, Edenderry Nursery School, Glenwood Primary School, Wheatfield Primary School, Holy Cross Boys Primary School and Holy Cross Girls Primary School). The key focus areas for the programme are: early years and parenting, community relations education linked into the curriculum, and focused residential programmes for families.
3. **Aspire:** A partnership between Currie Primary School and Holy Family Primary School (inner *North Belfast*) which provides shared services that: increase parental engagement and skills supporting their children's learning; improves educational outcomes for children engaged in the programme; and raises expectations of parents and children. This is done through partner organisations such as Barnardo's, PIPS and Parenting NI.
4. **Faces and Spaces:** Project is based on *Early Years* approach to good relations and operates through community-led and shared partnerships in five interface areas (*Falls Road/Shankill Road; Castlederg/Newtownstewart; Waterside/Cityside; Ballymena; Short Strand/East Belfast*). The project is based around the well-established and highly successful *Media Initiative for Children, Respecting Difference Programme*.
5. **Foyle Contested Space:** A partnership of three post primary and five primary schools in *Derry/Londonderry* to widen the scope of shared education. This includes the shared delivery of curriculum activities at KS2 & KS3 (Personal Development and Mutual Understanding [PDMU] and Learning for Life and Work [LLW]), provision of shared teacher training, and issues of common concern in sexual health, internet/mobile phone safety and alcohol awareness.

Phase 2 (November 2012 – March 2015)

6. **Communities Unite in Reconciling and Building Societies (CURBS):** The CURBS programme, based in *Craigavon*, is managed by Craigavon Intercultural Partnership (CIP) which delivers the programme in conjunction with local partners. The programme is based around five key phases: Step Up, Step In, Step Forward, Step Beyond and Step Out. *Step Up* involves collaborative partner engagement and *Step In* involves a range of cross-community and cross-cultural activities based around sport, art and media.
7. **South Armagh Childcare Consortium (SACC)**: Led by the South Armagh Childcare Consortium (a multi-agency partnership made up of a range of statutory and community agencies) the focus is on young families and children living in rural *South Armagh* – Bessbrook, Derrymore, Crossmaglen and Creggan. The programme delivers a cross community after-school project, the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme, Incredible Years Parenting Programme and a summer scheme.

8. **Spaces to Be: Playboard NI:** Spaces to Be is an outcomes focused diversity in play project targeted at children in middle childhood. The project is led and delivered by Playboard NI. It operates within four primary schools located in *East Belfast* (St Matthews and Nettlefield Primary Schools) and *Newtownstewart* (St Patricks and the Model Primary Schools).
9. **Waterside Partnership – Parents and Communities Together (PACT) -** This project is led by Action for Children in partnership with a range of community associations/groups in the Waterside area of *Derry/Londonderry*. The project is being delivered in three areas: Caw/Nelson Drive and the Triangle; Irish Street/Gobnascale; and Clooney Estate. PACT provides support to very young children and their parents. Its main elements are an eight week group work programme and individual support to parents/families at home.

Evaluation Findings

Participants

As of August 2014, across the two phases of the programme, there were **almost 13,800 distinct participants** (as opposed to repeat users). They are involved in a wide range of activities which straddle a number of target groups: nursery, pre-school, primary and post primary children; young adults; parents; and teachers/staff. Examples of activities included play based sessions (for nursery and pre-school children); shared curriculum activities, homework support/after-schools and social/creative/sporting activities for school age children; youth mentoring; and parenting and personal development programmes. Teachers and school staff participate in activities or are involved in delivering training sessions and workshops.

Programme Outcomes

Evidence collected by the ongoing programme evaluation is suggesting **positive outcomes for participants and communities** including:

Phase 1

- Increased self-esteem, confidence and empowerment
- Improved educational outcomes and parenting skills
- Strengthened relationships (personal, professional and cross-community)
- Greater movement across/through contested spaces
- Collective cross-community learning and capacity building amongst community organisations
- Development of networks between organisations

Phase 2

- Collaboration between youth providers
- The use of media projects to successfully engage participants
- The success of early years interventions
- Intensive support to target vulnerable parents as a way of tackling social isolation on a cross-community basis

Value for Money

It is clear from the ongoing evaluation findings that the Contested Space/Interface Programme is **delivering both significant outcomes and value for money** for funders. Based on phase one costings, which had 12,490 participants and £2.58m million of funding (allocated at August 2014) this equates to an average cost per participant of around £206 or **approximately £70 per participant per year**.

Learning and Collaboration

In developing the Contested Space/Interface Programme the funders aimed to test out a variety of approaches to supporting communities to work together in contested space/ interface areas. It was also planned that the **learning from these pilots would have an influence on future developments in this area of work.**

To facilitate this, a **Shared Learning Forum** (consisting of all members of the projects) was established to capture learning, identify effective practice and make recommendations on ways to better improve delivery of shared services to interface communities. The first Shared Learning Forum took place in May 2012 and meetings are held every few months.

In December 2013 the '**Shaping a Generation' seminar** was organised to showcase the work of the nine projects. The event was held at the Stormont Hotel and was **attended by over 100 delegates** from government departments, public bodies, councils and voluntary and community organisations. The seminar provided an insight into how the projects are *successfully improving relations* between and across disadvantaged contested space/interface communities, and how they are *collaborating to support each other*, sharing the learning and building their capacity and experience. The seminar also focused on and *how projects can help to contribute to policy agendas* such as *Together: Building a United Community* and *Building Safer, Shared and Confident Communities*.

In addition projects have also developed their own **range of resources** to promote and share the learning from the programme. These include DVDs, websites, toolkits and resource packs.

The common thread running through all of these projects is that they are working with a range of participants, from nursery school children, through young adults, to parents in interface areas blighted by poverty and sectarianism. The participants in the projects are those for whom the peace process has offered a limited legacy, not least in the poor level of public services available to them. What is obvious from the work of the overall programme is that participants have built strong relationships around common issues which impact on them collectively. They have established a level of interdependence in tackling problems which straddle interface areas and found a combined voice. **The key questions are: how are the lessons from this programme used to inform wider policy developments; and, where do the individual projects go from here?**

The most obvious read-across from the experience and learning gained in this programme is to the Government's strategic policy *Together: Building a United Community*. There are clear linkages to several of the headline actions identified in T:BUC: establishing 10 shared education campuses; the United Youth Programme; a programme of cross-community sporting events; removing interface barriers; rollout out of a 'buddy scheme' in nursery and primary schools; and shared summer schools. Yet, there could well be a lost opportunity in learning from the pilot work already completed through the Contested Space/Interface Programme. One simple example illustrates this. The United Youth Programme is currently consulting on a 'co-design' approach which builds a programme targeting 10,000 young people aged 16-24 who are not in education, training or employment. They will spend some £1.5m to pilot projects which will 'make a difference in terms of personal

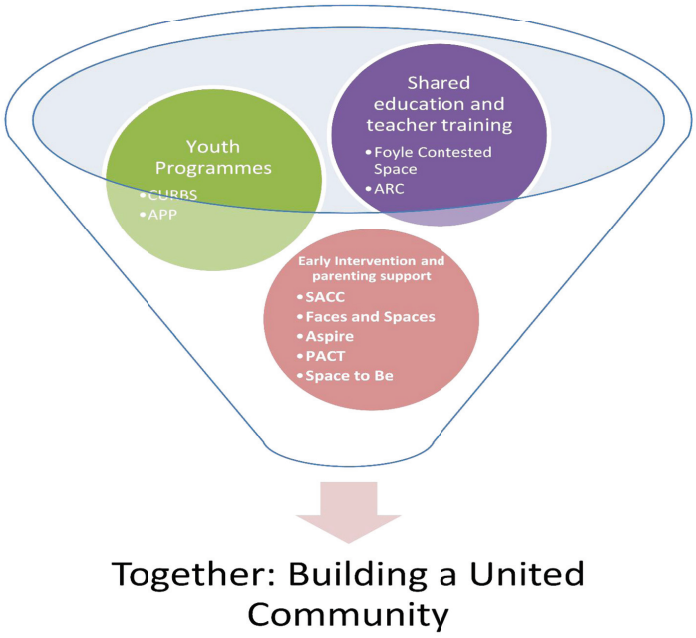
development, good relations, citizenship, employability, and benefit to communities and society'. But where is the learning from the Contested Space/Interface Programme which addresses a number of these themes? Why is there a need to pilot ideas for the United Youth Programme without first considering successful work from the Contested Space Programme? Other initiatives are also emerging such as Peace IV and the Shared Education Signature Project. There needs to be a way to connect the learning from Contested Space directly into these initiatives rather than starting from scratch.

Together: Building a United Community

The Director of the Good Relations Division in OFMDFM, Fergus McDevitt, has commented that: "There has been significant learning from the Contested Space/Interface Programme which helped in the design of the *Together: Building a United Community Strategy*. There is **real potential to scale-up some of the models which the programme pilot tested in difficult interface areas**."

Together: Building a United Community's main commitments, how they align with ongoing work in the Contested Space/Interface Programme, and the experience and learning on offer are summarised in the diagram and table below.

'A very helpful model of change has emerged (from the Contested Space Programme) that could potentially inform future interventions involving interface areas and areas where there are contested spaces'
T:BUC (2013): 61



6

WHAT IS THE LEARNING FOR TOGETHER: BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY?

T:BUC Commitments	Where Contested Space fits	What we can offer?
Roll out a *'buddy scheme'* in publicly run nursery and primary schools	ARC	The experience of Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools in *operating a buddy scheme* and associated resources.
Primary and post-primary *anti-sectarianism resources* and ensure that *teachers are trained, equipped and supported* to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module	ARC Foyle Contested Space	ARC involvement in training on the *CREDIT programme*. ARC *training resources pack* Foyle Contested Space on *primary and post-primary teachers experience* in tackling both sensitive and politically contentious issues
Enhance the quality and extent of *shared education provision*, thus ensuring that sharing in education becomes a central part of every child's educational experience Create 10 *Shared Educational Campuses*	Foyle Contested Space	Foyle Contested Space expertise in providing 'normalised' *shared education delivery* across 8 primary and post-primary schools. Foyle Contested Space's wider network of experience in *Shared Education Programme* experience
Improve attitudes amongst our young people and build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations	Faces and Spaces SACC Spaces to Be	*Pre-school education* which explores diversity and work with parents on interdependence and inclusion *Early intervention, parenting skills and negotiation* of shared space in a polarised community *Alternative (complementary) model of cross-community work with children* through the informal medium of play
Develop an *inter-community youth programme* to tackle sectarianism Develop *a summer camps/summer schools* with a focus on sport and developmental activities Develop significant programmes of *cross-community sporting events* which will focus in reconciliation through sport and be based at community level	CURBS APP	*Collaborative network building between youth providers and statutory organisations*. Effective use of sports, arts and the media in cross-community work APP's *partnering with Belfast Community Sports Development Network* (BCSDN) to deliver *multi-sports* as one of the options for structured activities. Also partnering with the 174Trust on their Game of 3 Halves event which promoted *cross-community relationship building through football/rugby/Gaelic* tournaments.
Focus on a more *inter-generational approach* to building good relations	Aspire PACT	*Targeted interventions to help parents and children* by external agencies with a focus on common needs *Intensive work with parents* who are highly vulnerable

Landscape Institute Northern Ireland

Landscape Institute
Northern Ireland

Inquiry into Building a United Community:

Inquiry by Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.
Response of the **Landscape Institute Northern Ireland** (LINI).

9 Oct 2014

The Landscape Institute is the chartered institute in the United Kingdom for Landscape Architects, incorporating Designers, Managers, and Scientists, concerned with conserving and enhancing the environment. The Landscape Institute promotes the highest standards in the practice of landscape planning, design, management and research, and represents members in private practice, at all levels of government and government agencies, in academic institutions and in commercial organisations.
The Landscape Institute is an educational charity and chartered body whose purpose is to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the benefit of the public. It champions well-designed and well-managed urban and rural landscape. The Landscape Institute's accreditation and professional procedures ensure that the designers, managers and scientists who make up the landscape architecture profession work to the highest standards. Its advocacy and education programmes promote the landscape architecture profession as one which focuses on design, environment and community in order to inspire great places where people want to live, work and visit. The Landscape Institute is committed to the principles of sustainable development by improving the quality of design of urban and rural environments and to the protection and enhancement of our physical and natural environments.
The Landscape Institute Northern Ireland branch (LINI) represents the professional membership within Northern Ireland and is particularly concerned with design, management and planning for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment of Northern Ireland.

NOTE:
As members of Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) we separately endorse and echo the comments and response prepared and submitted by that organization.
However we also include a number of further specific comments for consideration below.

Inquiry Terms of Reference

- Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:
  - an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
  - consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;
- Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:
  - seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
  - examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
  - consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.
- Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Landscape Institute
Northern Ireland

LINI Key Messages

1 Expertise

Landscape Institute Northern Ireland welcomes this timely Inquiry by the committee which clearly recognises that considered shared space forms an essential component in delivering a peaceful democratic shared future.
As design professionals specialising in external spatial design, Chartered Landscape Architects work in all areas of the outdoor environment, indeed it is members of our profess who are responsible for the creation and delivery of many of Northern Irelands most successful external environments and Shared Spaces.

Recent High Profile Landscape Architect led designs include:

- The Connswater Community Greenway, East Belfast
- Landscape Character Assessment NI
- FE McWilliams Sculpture Museum, NI
- Castle Gardens, Lisburn
- Omagh Town Centre.
- Belfast Streets Ahead.
- Custom House Square, Belfast
- Ebrington Barracks, Derry
- Belfast Waterfront.

LINI believe our chartered professionals are best placed to deliver the physical requirements of positive shared space through appropriate design development, consultation and community engage.
Landscape Architecture is a cross cutting discipline focused on delivery of Green Infrastructure and sustainable places.
Our Institute has researched and published several valuable position papers in recent years which collectively focus on the benefits which good sustainable design and integrated spatial planning can deliver.

Recent examples include:

- Green Infrastructure (An Integrated approach to Land Use
- Housing (Creating good living Environments)
- Landscape and Public Health
- Water – (Sustainable water management)

2 Resources

LINI believe that in Northern Ireland when compared to the rest of the UK our profession is seriously under represented within public sector which weakens our potential to adequately address the issues raised in the Inquiry.

We consider RPA an opportunity to reposition the profession to best assist with delivery of the majority of objectives set out within this Inquiry.

Landscape Institute
Northern Ireland

We would welcome endorsement at central government level to ensure that the new local authorities secure the resources (personnel) to develop strategies which would phase out contested space and in turn deliver positive shared future for all society.

3 Education

LINI are aware that greater education is required regarding the benefits of good spatial design and shared space; we seek resources and support to educate these messages at all levels, from communities and schools, through to civil servants and elected representatives.

We believe there is a significant gap at tertiary education level in Northern Ireland, with no school currently specialising in external spatial design and addressing the issues raised in the Inquiry.
Those wishing to become professionals in this field continue to travel to mainland UK, Republic of Ireland or elsewhere.

4 Policy Framework

LINI welcome the recent publication of 'Living Places' – (which our members were instrumental in preparing)
This forms an excellent starting point for the development and stewardship of our urban environments, however LINI are concerned that this document needs to form part of an overarching strategy and cultural attitude towards all our the Landscapes and Places.

LINI believe it is essential that a 'National Landscape Strategy' similar to the Republic of Ireland is developed for Northern Ireland in support of planning (designing), managing and conserving our spatial environments.

NOTE: In this context the LINI adopt the definition of 'Landscape' as referred to in the European Landscape Convention to which Northern Ireland is signatory.

> "Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors;

This refers to 'All Landscapes' from small scale despoiled urban landscapes and spaces, through to large expanses of designated rural landscapes such as AONBs

With a coherent and strong framework in place in the form of a National Landscape Strategy, combined with education and resources for community engagement, we believe that we can deliver better shared living environments.

LINI is celebrating its 50th year as a profession in Northern Ireland and over the course of that period have witnessed a significant demise of our public sector membership mirroring general government attitude towards the provision, maintenance & durability of our landscapes and quality external space.

However in the lead up to Local Government reform resulting for the RPA process, we believe there is potential to address obvious gaps which exist within the current structures by building capacity and recognition within the new local authority regime.
As a profession we are working very hard towards this, highlighting not only the valuable work which our members undertake, but emphasising the essential contribution experienced Landscape professionals have and can bring to the new authorities.

Landscape Institute
Northern Ireland

Currently Belfast City Council and Derry City Council are the only local authorities which directly employ Chartered Landscape Architects. The Landscape Institute strongly believe that each of the new authorities should seriously consider the value of directly employing /engaging at least one experienced professional to be a 'Head of Profession' with a remit to assist preparation of development plans; to writing procurement briefs; to assist with community / neighbourhood planning; to prepare open space audits; to identify improvement projects and strategies as part of a spatial planning approach; to assist planning official assess applications for 'Good design' standards; to encourage development of local green infrastructure; to enforce permissions; to assist with community and neighbourhood level engagement and ultimately assist the new local authorities become an intelligent client.

5 Shared Space through Collaboration

Landscape Architecture is a unique profession at the interface between people and natural systems. It is rooted in an understanding of how the environment works and what makes each place unique. A key feature of the profession is its ability to deliver a range of social, environmental and economic benefits at the same time. This represents an approach to development and placemaking which makes the most of our landscapes and townscapes.

LINI believe that our design professionals working with planning officials, communities and other stakeholders have the necessary skill set to assist with the mediation of the difficult challenges set within this Inquiry.

We would welcome an opportunity to present our position papers directly to the committee and discuss specifically scenarios and case studies which have involved our members in the successful design and delivery of shared space and breakdown social, religious and racial division both locally and internationally.

We would specifically like to discuss further how our members could be better placed to assist with the Committees Inquiry objectives, and how limited resources can be best distributed to contribute positively to the delivery of potential solutions to these complex challenges.

The Landscape Institute Northern Ireland branch would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to contribute to this Inquiry.

For further communication and future consultations, please contact:

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Prepared for Landscape Institute Northern Ireland (LINI) by Pete Mullin CMLI (Landscape Institute Policy Consultant for Northern Ireland).

Linking Generations Northern Ireland

Response by Linking Generations Northern Ireland

Inquiry into Building a United Community

22nd September 2014

1. Background Information

1.1 Linking Generations Northern Ireland (LGNI) is an intergenerational initiative of the Beth Johnson Foundation. The Beth Johnson Foundation is a UK wide charity that works to make a positive impact on the lives of older people, to gain recognition for the valuable role that older people play in society and to challenge age discrimination and stereotyping. We are the only organisation solely advocating the development and promotion of intergenerational practice (IP) as a catalyst for social change in Northern Ireland.

1.2 Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities. Based on our experience and research, we encourage practitioners to focus on activities which promote greater understanding, closer relations and respect between age groups and provide opportunities to address shared problems.

We do this by:

- Developing and promoting opportunities to bring generations together and build capacity within communities to sustain this approach;
- Supporting the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to recognise all-age approaches and embedding them within their strategies, practices and policies;
- Encouraging, lobbying and influencing the government to provide support to all-age approaches to address ageism and age segregation in society.

1.3 LGNI have established themselves as the intergenerational experts in Northern Ireland and are the current organisation of choice when accessing training, support and advice in the development of intergenerational approaches.

1.4 Our vision:

Northern ireland will be an age-friendly region: age groups will not be segregated and ageism will not exist; all-age approaches will be the norm.

2. Contribution to the Inquiry

2.1 We argue that the consistent emphases over the past forty or more years on working with children and young people should shift to an intergenerational approach. By this, we mean working with age groups together. It is well recognised through decades of development psychology and social psychology literature that children form their opinions, attitudes and behaviours primarily through their interactions and relationships with significant adults. We know that parental influence and neighbourhood influence are critical but yet our approach to tackling good relations problems has almost exclusively focussed on a single age category. The current TBUC strategy repeats this emphasis on working with children and young people. Whilst it mentions that intergenerational approaches are encouraged, the key messages continue to focus on children and young people as though they exist in some kind of bubble!

3. Recommendations based on our experience

3.1 Key findings of Phase 1 of the Review of Good Relations funding highlight the need to **recognise expertise and identify good practice in the field** (see 3.2 below). An appetite for **change is also identified alongside the need for greater collaboration and partnership** working (see 3.3 below). LGNI assert that the use of an all-age (intergenerational) approach has the potential to contribute to addressing these stumbling blocks.

3.2 *Recognising expertise and identifying good practice*

We have worked alongside Cooperation Ireland within their PEACE III funded schools based projects in the North West, Louth/Newry and Mourne and Lisburn/Castlereagh clusters to provide expertise in engaging generations together in good relations activity. The anecdotal feedback from this work and in particular, feedback from teachers, has indicated that the inclusion of adults from family and/or community in sessions in schools creates a range of positive outcomes: Reflections between generations can be a powerful experience as we recognise that we learn from each other; Ageist perceptions about young and old can be tackled through extended intergenerational contact; Schools are able to develop connections with families and communities in a new way and children may be more able to express less judgemental views at home. Unfortunately, most of these outcomes can still only be expressed as 'potential' but we are optimistic that an upcoming evaluation of the North West PEACE III clusters' programme 'Generations for Peace' will be forthcoming.

3.3 *Change and increased collaborative working*

LGNI have been working across NI since 2009 with support from Atlantic Philanthropies (which is ending in the next few months). One of the key things we have learned is that collaboration and partnership is a key feature of

intergenerational practice. Within neighbourhoods and through institutions, we categorise each other on the basis of age. Government, education and health care systems, academia, policy, community organisations, charities and lobbying groups all consistently segregate us on the basis of our age. A consequence of this is that intergenerational practice is necessarily a collaborative venture. Whilst we recognise that single age group work may be beneficial in tackling specific issues, we are calling for a sea-change in good relations practice: all-age lens. The use of the word 'lens' is to iterate that children live their lives in relation to other age groups, as do adults. One cannot be young, unless someone else is old and vice versa.

4. Key points

4.1 In seeking to build a united community, intergenerational (all-age) approaches should become a central feature of practice. This is in recognition that the continued emphasis within practice on working primarily with children and young people in isolation needs to be reconsidered.

4.2 We believe that the use of an indicator that seeks to measure the level of intergenerational engagement in good relations processes would be an excellent start. Placing a requirement for grantees to, at the very least, consider how they can incorporate an intergenerational element to their work would begin a process where we can tackle our intergenerationally transferred problems together.

4.3 We would be delighted to provide a delegation to the committee to answer questions and discuss the potential of intergenerational practice in supporting the building of a united community.

Response prepared by

Dr. Lynn Johnston (Regional Development Worker) lynn.johnston@bjf.org.uk

and

Ms. Vicki Titterington (Manager) vicki@bjf.org.uk

Additional comment

LGNI is seeking funding to enable us to support good relations practitioners across NI to consider incorporating an intergenerational element in to their work. We applied through the OFMDFM process in February 2014 for this current financial year and we have yet to receive a response. At recent events hosted to discuss the TBUC strategy and its delivery, practitioners have voiced concern that the perceived lack of collaboration within OFMDFM at Ministerial and elected representative level is not only hindering progress in communities, but projects a chaotic and uninspired leadership for these critical issues. We also feel that a long term approach to funding must be key as yearly funding does not promote a sustainable approach to the work.

National Union of Students - Union of Students in Ireland

Submission from NUS-USI to Inquiry into Building a United Community

(National Union of Students - Union of Students in Ireland)

31 July 2014

Summary

NUS-USI welcomes the creation of this Inquiry as it is absolutely vital that a shared future can be created in Northern Ireland. We see integrated education and having integrated services as essential to tackling all forms of societal division and being crucial in the delivery of a shared future.

NUS-USI does not wish to be considered to give oral evidence to the Inquiry and our written submission covers our thoughts on this subject.

NUS-USI objectives on a shared future:

- Children are educated together in integrated education
- Government ensures that all public space is shared space
- Government addresses segregated services and works to ensure all public services are delivered on an integrated basis
- Government must pro-actively work with communities and build good relations to enable the removal of all interface barriers as soon as possible
- The community and voluntary sectors could play a key role in delivering a shared future and government should re-instate the civic forum
- A sustainable deal on unresolved issues on a shared future like flags, parades and addressing the past must be delivered by the political parties as soon as possible

1. Shared space

1.1 NUS-USI believes that all public space should be shared space. This is essential to ensure that a united community can be created and to demonstrate that everyone is welcome everywhere around Northern Ireland.

1.2 It is essential that government creates a strategy and publicly demonstrates that all space should be shared space to ensure that a clear message is sent out that Northern Ireland is building a genuinely shared future.

1.3 Government should research and utilise international best practice on tackling societal division to ensure that a shared future can be delivered in the most effective way possible.

2. Integrated services

2.1 It is absolutely essential that government ensures that all public services are integrated so that any forms of division in relation to public services are addressed.

2.2 The cost of division in Northern Ireland is extremely significant and it is very important that government addresses this as quickly and effectively as possible.

2.3 Ensuring that services are integrated could help foster a sense of a united community and could help build good relations.

3. Benefits of a shared future

3.1 The benefits of a shared future could be extremely significant and could help boost our economy. Creating a shared future could help attract investment to Northern Ireland and potentially help create jobs.

3.2 To give Northern Ireland the best prospects for creating employment it is vital that it can be demonstrated that government is addressing societal division.

3.3 It is crucial that the strongest possible signal is sent out that Northern Ireland is open for business.

3.4 It is also essential that government pro-actively tackles all forms of discrimination to ensure that a clear message is sent out on this matter.

3.5 The societal benefits of a shared future could be extremely significant. To have a society where people live and work together could be key for Northern Ireland moving into the future. A key cornerstone of removing this division is ensuring that people are educated together.

4. Interface barriers

4.1 Government should put plans in place to create good relations to help facilitate the removal of interface barriers where they exist.

4.2 We need to see all interface barriers removed as soon as possible and it is extremely important that plans are created by government to deliver community support for the removal of these barriers.

4.3 Opening up the community and removing barriers could make access to services and employment opportunities even easier for people, and this could help create a more cohesive and shared society. Meaningful community building could be another significant benefit from them removal of interface barriers.

4.4 Government needs to be pro-active in doing the ground work around removing interface barriers as it is important that people can see the positive benefits that change could have.

4.5 It is also extremely important that funding for good relations work is focused to all of society and not just two sides of the community, because it is crucial that funding helps deliver racial equality, gender equality and equality for people who are LGBT and people who are disabled.

4.6 It is important that the community is in support of the removal of interface barriers before they are removed, and that is why government needs to invest and have clear and pro-active strategies to ensure community support for removing barriers.

4.7 Government must ensure that ambitious timetables and targets are set for the removal of all interface barriers and that the strategy is pro-active as well as being responsive to people's needs.

5. A shared future for all

5.1 Creating a shared future has to be about tackling racism, homophobia, sexism and sectarianism as well as other forms of prejudice. It must not simply be about tackling sectarianism.

5.2 A holistic approach to good relations must be taken and this must involve addressing all forms of inequality against everyone across society.

5.3 In terms of building a shared future, cross-border and international cooperation could deliver a significant and extremely positive impact for Northern Ireland. NUS-USI believes that Northern Ireland building further cross-border and international links and co-operation could be very beneficial for students and could increase student mobility and work placement options. This co-operation could also boost the economy through the potential for further business links which may deliver export opportunities, investment and create new jobs.

6. Integrated education

6.1 NUS-USI believes that in relation to education, the Together: Building a United Community strategy should focus on ensuring that children are educated together through integrated education.

6.2 Integrating education should be seen as the objective across our school system. The message that not delivering an integrated system might send out could be very damaging to Northern Ireland's future.

6.3 There could be significant negative ramifications for Northern Ireland's global profile if government continues to resource division though funding nonintegrated public services or non-integrated education, and does not make plans and set targets for delivering integrated services and integrated education as the way forward in the future.

7. Civic society and a shared future

7.1 Civic society has a significant role to play delivering a shared future and government should listen to their views and utilise elements of best practice from their work. NUS-USI believes that re-instating the civic forum could have significant benefits as regards the community and voluntary sectors and their potential inputs, and this could help in work towards delivering a shared future.

7.2 NUS-USI has a proud history of working towards delivering a shared future and also cross-border and UK-wide co-operation.

7.3 NUS-USI works in partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland, which is based in in the Republic of Ireland, and with the National Union of Students cacross the rest of the UK and this partnership and collaboration can illustrate the benefits of UK-wide and cross-border co-operation.

8. Unresolved matters relating to a shared future

8.1 The political parties must deliver agreement on any outstanding issues in relation to a shared future as quickly as possible.

8.2 Party talks must re-commence as soon as possible and it could be extremely useful if the British and Irish governments as well as the international community play a role within the talks in relation to convening and chairing them.

8.3 Northern Ireland needs urgent agreement on parades, flags and addressing the past. Each of these issues, being unresolved, can pose very significant problems on a regular basis and can place the stability of the political institutions in jeopardy. It is incumbent on the parties in government to deliver consensus and sustainable solutions on these matters as swiftly as possible.

8.4 In addressing the legacy of the past it is extremely important that the needs of victims and survivors are met and that the process helps build and secure a shared future.

Newtownabbey Borough Council

Inquiry into Together Building A United Community
Response from Good Relations Service
Newtownabbey Borough Council

Organisation

This submission has been completed by the Good Relations Service on behalf of Newtownabbey Borough Council. The Council is committed to the promotion of good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group and aims to foster good relations between all those who live in, work in or visit the Borough. This commitment is further underpinned in the Council's Good Relations Strategy for 2012-2016 entitled "Living Well Together".

The Terms of Reference for the Inquiry are to:

Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:

- ***An examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;***
- ***Consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;***

Response

Newtownabbey Borough Council welcomes the Government's commitment to good relations reflected in the Together Building A United Community Strategy. The examination of theory and practice relating to good relations needs to be grounded in the context of a society moving out of conflict towards a lasting shared future. A commitment to good relations and a shared society in Northern Ireland will have extensive benefits and gains at both a social and economic level and is both morally and financially more viable than the cost of division.

Consideration of best practice should include the implementation of international obligations and standards including a human rights framework. Existing Northern Ireland and UK wide standards and best practice around equality and race relations also needs to be mplemented. Good relations needs to be mainstreamed across the various sectors controlled by government including education, justice, arts and leisure and social development to ensure it is centralised and of key consideration when making policy decisions based on creating a shared society.

Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural including:

- Seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
- Examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
- Consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.

Response

The challenge of removing interface barriers reflects the challenges of creating a shared society. The goal of increasing sharing around services, housing and education and increasing feelings of safety and security will create a more natural environment where interface barriers become redundant. In order to create a strong stable society the focus needs to go beyond thinking about 'two communities' and a culture of 'them and us', to thinking of Northern Ireland as one whole society.

Community Planning will provide a vehicle through which each new Council can formulate local plans to address the issue of interfaces. Each new Council area is diverse with different good relations issues which are specific to their Communities; therefore, Community Planning should ensure all voices are considered when planning and agreeing local interventions and solutions.

It will be incumbent on central government to continue to resource local authorities to promote good relations at a local level to maximise the key themes emanating from TBUC.

Good Relations indicators should include a wide range of both fiscal and social indicators to determine the success of the TBUC policy such as:

- Results of the Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey as a baseline indicator of the general populace;
- Comparative costs of service delivery in a divided society (baseline indictator, Deloitte Report 2007);
- Levels of emergency policing required;
- Levels of territory marking;
- Levels of tourism and inward investment among others;

Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Response

There needs to be a strong cross departmental commitment to a peacebuilding plan. This needs to be open, sustainable, outcome focused with resourcing for peace building work both on the ground and at central and local government. Leadership from central government and a long term commitment to addressing contentious issues is required.

The Council's own Good Relations Strategy for 2012-2016 is focused on "Living Well Together" to be addressed through five key themes including leadership, hard issues (flags, bonfires, sectarianism, racism and prejudice), addressing diversity, equality and cultural identity, building shared and consensual spaces and building cross departmental work and internal good relations which complement the key themes identified in TBUC. The Council will continue to work in partnership at a local level to implement these themes.

It is vital that central government commits to resourcing and monitoring the outcomes of the TBUC Strategy on a cross departmental basis to allow delivery bodies to effect this change in their local areas.

It is vital that an ongoing and long term commitment is made to continue to resource the District Council Community Relations Programme (DCCRP) to support the newly amalgamated councils to effect real change at a local level and tackle sectarian and racism on the ground and promote services to build a united community. Councils are keenly aware of the needs of their local community and are a vital local service provider, a position that will be enhanced even further with the Community Planning process. Since the introduction of the DCCRP in 1991 the programme has changed beyond recognition and has played a vital support role in building community and race relations in Northern Ireland. Local councils have often found themselves at the forefront of these difficult issues and have pioneered programmes and agreements around bonfires, removal and reduction of territory markings and building community confidence, often in the absence of leadership and guidance from Central Government and their associated agencies. The District Council Community Relations Programme should be acknowledged and recognised as a key mechanism for the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Together Building A United Community strategy and as such a long term commitment should be given to resourcing this project with assurances that support will be available for both staffing and on the ground programming.

NIACRO



Written Evidence to the

OFMDFM Committee Inquiry into

Building a United Community

Date: 10/10/2014

PACT: 2014/39

niacro working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

Amelia House
4 Amelia Street,
Belfast, BT2 7GS

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www.niacro.co.uk

Kathy O'Hanlon
Committee for the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister
Room 285, Parliament Buildings,
Ballymiscaw, Stormont,
Belfast,
BT4 3XX

10th October 2014

Dear Kathy,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the OFMDFM Committee Inquiry into Building a United Community.

NIACRO is a voluntary organisation, working for over 40 years to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities. NIACRO provides services for and works with children and young people, with adults in the community, and with people in prison and their families, whilst working to influence others and apply all of our resources effectively.

NIACRO receives funding from, and works in partnership with, a range of statutory departments and agencies in Northern Ireland, including criminal justice, health, social services, housing and others.

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Plan and would be happy to provide further information if that would be helpful.

We look forward to receiving the final document.

Yours sincerely

Pat Conway
Director of Operations and Public Affairs

Enc

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Silver

NIACRO
Recognised by the HMRC as a charity XN 48280 Company Limited by Guarantee No. N.I 18121
Chairman: S McDowell; Chief Executive: O Lyner; Chairman Finance Committee: Patrick L Farry BSc FCCA



working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

NIACRO's submission to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

Introduction

NIACRO welcomes the opportunity to provide written evidence to the OFMDFM Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community**.** We are a voluntary organisation, working for more than 40 years to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities. We provide services for children and young people, people in prison and their families, and adults in the community. The services we deliver inform our policy position and give us the insight needed to provide meaningful comment on policy and legislation. Our response has been developed by our work with people who offend, their families, and people and communities affected by offending behaviour.

NIACRO has been involved in contributing to the building of a united community throughout the life of the organisation. Whilst primarily concerned with the re-integration and resettlement of individuals in the criminal justice system through its work with people with a criminal record, people in prisons, young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system as well as families of those in the criminal justice system, NIACRO has also been concerned with conflict related matters.

Best practice and experience

With respect to the proposed Inquiry's terms of reference, NIACRO is basing its submission on the work carried out through its Base 2 project (working with individuals and families under threat in communities), the Challenge Hate Crime project (a partnership between NIPS and NIACRO, primarily developing a model of intervention with perpetrators of hate crime supported by local, national and international research) and the STEM project (Supporting Tenancies for people from Ethnic Minority backgrounds).

Base 2 has been in existence since 1990 and provides an emergency response service to those people and families under threat of physical violence and exclusion. Since its inception, this project has dealt with approximately 20,000 referrals. Since the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, it was hoped that the incidence of informal policing and intimidation would reduce and ultimately wither away. This has proven not to be the case and referral numbers for the past ten years have averaged 1000 per annum. Paramilitary style shootings and assaults as recorded by the PSNI are still significant in number and the level of threat experienced by individuals and families remains high.

However, the characteristics around alleged reason for threats have changed since the early 90s, and Base 2 has been recording hate related incidents since 2009/10. These are mostly concerned with sectarian, racist and sexual orientation hate incidents. It was this work that informed NIACRO's Challenge Hate Crime project.

working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

Challenge Hate Crime Project (CHC)

This project was a partnership between NIPS and NIACRO funded under the European Union's Peace III Programme, managed by SEUPB. It ran from 2009 to 2012 and comprised of two elements: 1) developing an effective model of working with perpetrators of hate crime to reduce the likelihood of their re-offending and 2) research into hate crime in Northern Ireland. In terms of the practice, training manuals were produced for interventionists. The research which informed this practice included analysis of hate crime data in Northern Ireland, an attempt to define sectarianism, the stated views of political parties and drawing from national and international experience. A conference in autumn 2012, "Challenge Hate Crime: Deal with it", brought together politicians, policy makers, representatives of the statutory criminal justice system, relevant NGOs as well as representatives from communities experiencing hate crime to discuss the key messages from the project. Twelve reports were produced and are available on the NIACRO website at www.niacro.org.uk. It was clear during the life of the programme that there were many resistors with respect to addressing hate crime in Northern Ireland and a summary of these is contained in the table below.

Hate Crime – Audit of Resistors and Solutions (Legislative, Structural and Attitudinal)

	Resistors	Solution
Lack of Definition	No agreed definition of sectarianism	Working definition developed – incorporated into legislation or at least defined operationally
Legislation	No reference to sectarianism/ transgender Aggravated hostility, a two edged sword	Review and incorporate Consider whether aggravated hostility is a barrier
Government /Politicians	Lack of agreement in regards to sectarian hate crime Ambivalence/ ambiguity towards certain groups	Develop position with parties internally Achieve consensus Visible leadership Set up all party working group – develop executive strategy

4



working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

Society / Community	Denial / ambiguity / fear Tolerance of types of hate crime Lack of public outcry	Collective efforts to 'deal with it', eg. reinstate and develop Unite Against Hate Crime
Victim	Perception ignored	Perception accepted Increased level (amount) / depth (type) of self reporting Contribute to development of practice and involvement
Perpetrator	Denial / ambiguity / fear	Programme – Opportunity to acknowledge and address acts of hate crime
Intermediaries	Lack of experience dealing directly with topic of hate crime combined with working in criminal justice environment	Build on pilot and develop robust practice based on experience and drawing on practice/resources of others
Department / Agencies beyond Criminal Justice System	No focus on early intervention Denial / downplaying e.g. bullying in schools	Acknowledge behaviours at early stage and act
Criminal Justice System	Issues in regards to communication / understanding/ denial/ silos	Ministerial commitment to action plan leading to enhanced communication and reduction of hate crime

Although the CHC project has ended, work continues and NIACRO has a place on the European Radicalisation Awareness Network[1] promoted by European Commission as well as the European Network Of De-radicalisation (ENOD).

Supporting Tenancies of People from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds (STEM)

The STEM project has been in existence for approximately three months and is a housing floating support service. Influenced by the work of Base 2 and CHC, the STEM project is concerned with intervening where racist intimidation has occurred and seeks to prevent homelessness and maintain (people and families) their tenancies in the community. STEM also seeks to reduce the risk of

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/radicalisation_awareness_network/index_en.htm



working to reduce crime and its impact on people and communities

incidents being perpetrated by engaging with key organisations that support minority ethnic groups. STEM works with district housing staff and broader communities to address the issue of hate crime and contributes to tension monitoring within the Belfast Council area.

Good relations

In our initial comments on the design of the Together: Building a United Community - United Youth Programme, we recommended that the Department needs to engage with young people in defining what good relations is and how they can embrace the concept. We believe that good relations can be incorporated in developing young people's skills and knowledge of wider societal structures and how we all contribute to a vibrant and healthy society.

Conclusion

Building a united community is a vast remit. It encompasses a wide range of stakeholders across all sectors. NIACRO, through the work outlined above, believes that it has a significant contribution to make to this Inquiry. It is work that has a continuing evolving dynamic. NIACRO would take the view that future work needs to based on the resistors outlined in the above table and advocates that solutions can be found assuming that stakeholders acknowledge and develop their potential role.

NIACRO has framed its work within the context of reducing offending and improving communities with the consequent reduction in numbers of victims. We would take the view that not enough is understood about the typology and quantum of hate crime. Some of the suggestions we propose that would contribute to achieving the aims of this Inquiry are as follows:

- Developing information on hate crimes that defines "who is doing what to whom, where and why". There is an onus on the PSNI and other criminal justice agencies to collect these statistics upon which a future strategy may be based.
- Develop and implement a bespoke model of intervening with perpetrators of hate crime based on the work carried out by CHC. No such model exists within the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland which means that individuals may be sentenced without having their behaviour addressed (although we are aware some agencies, eg PBNI and YJA are attempting to develop practice).
- There should be a focus by all criminal justice agencies on reducing offending rates and reducing rates of recidivism requiring "tracking" of individual perpetrators.
- Review the current legislation with a view to naming hate crime without enhanced sentencing as this legislation in itself seems to be a barrier to identifying hate crime.
- Utilise the resources in communities identified in the CHC programme drawn from communities affected by hate crime.
- An adequately resourced strategy that states clearly the problem, the process, the outputs and outcomes.

NIAMH (Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health)

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Niamh Written evidence submission in response to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community, July 2014

For further information please contact:
Nuala Dalcz, Director of External Affairs, 028 90328474, n.dalcz@niamhwellbeing.org

1. Introduction

Niamh (Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health) would like to thank the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister for the opportunity to submit written evidence in relation to the Inquiry into Building a United Community. Niamh welcomes a joined up approach from all governmental departments to tackle sectarianism, division and good relations.

2. Niamh Background Information

Niamh, (the Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health), is the largest and longest established independent charity focusing on mental health and wellbeing services in Northern Ireland.

Our Vision – Mental Health and Wellbeing for all
Our Values - We provide high quality, professional and innovative services
We enable positive outcomes for the people who use our services
We act with integrity and compassion
We engage with and inspire each other
We influence policy and public opinion

Niamh is structured as a group consisting of the corporate body and four service and programmatic elements Beacon, Inspire, Carecall and Journey Towards Healing.

- As a corporate, Niamh is committed to organisational development, research, advocacy, lobbying and income generation. It provides an evidence base to shape its services, policy messaging to help shape the sector and safeguard its service users and it promotes positive mental health and wellbeing in all its forms.
- Beacon provides support services to people with experience of mental illness through supported housing, day support and advocacy services.
- Carecall provides therapeutic support through employee assistance programmes, and specialist therapeutic services delivered in a wide variety of contexts.
- Inspire provides support for people with learning disabilities in four residential locations in Northern Ireland – Armagh, Antrim, Lisburn and Omagh

Niamh is uniquely placed to provide evidence to this inquiry through its Journey Towards Healing project, which works with disenfranchised communities, politicians, community leaders and international experts to focus of building resilience and community cohesion in a post conflict society.

Issues as defined in Terms of Reference

Issue 1

Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:
- an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
- consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;

Response 1

1a - an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services

Niamh believes that the creation of greater 'shared spaces and services' in our communities to promote good relations and address the trauma related needs of Victims and Survivors is critical.
It is essential that people are enabled to come together to experience healing and treatment in a shared space environment. To truly create a more cohesive society and make an attitudinal and behavioural change, the trauma related services must;

- be much wider than PTSD
- focus on building resilience
- be accessible to all members of our shared society.

A shared space with wraparound services focusing on the pyschological impact of sectarianism, the conflict and building resilience for the future is the only effective way of building a cohesive community and achieving the strategic objective of a united community. This demands not only the development of iconic projects through capital investment but also the development of relationships between and within communities, changing attitudes and behaviours at a local level and addressing deep held beliefs.

Shared Spaces and Services must be designed to move society beyond the management of conflict and on to transformation and reconciliation.

1b - consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services

Niamh is uniquely placed to provide evidence of best practice and experience both locally and nationally. Through its work in developing and delivering Journey Towards Healing it has reviewed research and engaged in constructive dialogue with a wide range of key stakeholders and influencers in community, local, national and international settings.
These groups include:

- Northern Ireland Alternatives (NIA), The PSNI, Queens University Belfast, University of Ulster, Coiste Republican prisoners group, The Falls Community Council, EPIC & ACT Loyalist prisoners groups, Political parties locally and regionally, Community Foundation for Northern Ireland, WAVE, Mediation Northern Ireland, Healing Through Remembering, The Causeway Institute

- Governmental agencies such as the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors and the Parades Commission.
- Emory University Atlanta, Harvard University Boston, Boston University, Tel Aviv University, Al Quds Jerusalem, Ben Gurion University Beersheba and Fairmont State University West Virginia.
- International experts such as:
    - Lois Clinton (a world wide expert on building resilience in conflict and post conflict zones and uses the TRIM and CRIM--Trauma Resiliency Model and Community Resiliency Model--now used in high conflict zones and post-conflict zones.)
    - Neal Christie (an expert in racism in a post conflict society)

Issue 2

Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:
- seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
- examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
- consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.

Response 2

Northern Ireland society and its social interactions have been deeply disrupted because of the history of conflict. That history prevents much social engagement that would happen as normal in many other cultures. The traumatic component of this history impacts on the abilities of individuals and communities to engage, interact and build god relations– it is a barrier to accessing services and support. In this context Niamh has developed a number of programmes in a community shared space context that build resilience in this post conflict society. These structured programmes deal with the impact of our collective conflicted past in a psychologically informed way to build resilience and facilitate meaningful, long term reconciliation. Creating a society characterised by good relations and community integration where interface barriers are removed is impossible without taking the psychological impact of this history into account.

Issue 3

Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Response 3

It is essential that we build the capacity of grass roots communities and establish the community context necessary to allow political representatives to move forward on difficult issues with confidence. This requires 'single identity' discussion and capacity building initiatives and increased levels of cross community dialogue.

Niamh recommends:

the development of shared spaces with wraparound services focusing on the pyschological impact of sectarianism, the trauma of conflict and building resilience.

Conclusion

We welcome this opportunity to provide written evidence on the inquiry and hope that our comments will help to shape positive policy and decision making that translate to activities that will benefit all communities in our shared society. We would wish to be considered to give further oral evidence to the committee.

4th September 2014

NICIE (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)

nicie
NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

26 September 2014

Kathy O'Hanlon
Committee for the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister
Room 285, Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

Dear Kathy,

I am pleased to submit the response of the Northern Ireland Council for Education (NICIE) to the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

I would request also that NICIE be given the opportunity to present to the Committee of the First and Deputy First Minister on this important topic.

I would also extend an invitation to the Committee to visit the Hazelwood Integrated Schools, located on the interface in North Belfast to experience first-hand the important work that can be achieved in building a united community through educating children together.

I look forward to your response to these requests.

Yours sincerely

Noreen Campbell

Chief Executive Officer

Educating Children Together

Northern Ireland Council For Integrated Education
25 College Gardens I Belfast I BT9 6BS I Tel: 028 9097 2910 I Fax 028 9097 2919
Company Reg. No. NI 22427 I Charity Reg. No. XN91943 I Email: INFO@NICIE.ORG.UK I : www.nicie.org

Submission from

NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR INTEGRATED EDUCATION

to inquiry into building a united community

No one is born hating one another because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.

Nelson Mandela

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

submission to the inquiry into building a united community

NICIE welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the inquiry into building a united community. We hold that the system of education which prevails is a legacy which no longer reflects the multi-cultural and pluralist Northern Ireland of the twenty first century. Our voice is one of the few that has made a lasting impact in transforming the lives of people and communities away from the sterile politics of sectarian mistrust and division to a reality of acceptance of difference and a celebration of diversity.

NICIE believes that a key strategy in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance involves the education of children together, irrespective of social/cultural background, religion, ability and on a daily basis, in an all-inclusive and mutually respectful *shared space*. Our schools are as direct result of *communities* acting together.

Our founding principles articulate a vision of a 'united community', with peace and reconciliation at its core. Where our schools are working along interface areas they provide examples of good practice in challenging fear and ignorance and in bringing communities together.

The benefits of integrated education are recognised widely and our schools have become a model for other societies dealing with division and conflict. Significantly, support and demand for integrated schooling remains consistently high (at around eighty per cent from various polls) but provision of places is in shortage with no new schools being established within the last three years.

NICIE would respectfully ask that the following recommendations be considered when the committee reports on 'building a united inquiry'.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Northern Ireland Executive accepts its responsibilities as outlined in the Good Friday Agreement '…to facilitate and encourage Integrated Education… in the process of reconciliation and the creation of a culture of tolerance at every level of society.'

That the Department of Education be held accountable for the implementation of its statutory duty under Article 64 of the Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 'to encourage and facilitate integrated education', as reaffirmed in the recent judicial review.

That, having accepted this responsibility through acceptance of an assembly motion on placing article 64 at the heart of educational planning, the minister now ensures that the choice of parents — and the rights of children — to secure a place at an integrated school is realised.

That a target be adopted for at least one third of all school places to be integrated and for there to be an integrated choice in every area.

That all pre-school education be officially re-designated as integrated.

That the new single authority be responsible for planing for educational provision on an area basis in full consultation with parents.

NICIE welcomes the opportunity to inform the executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance; and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making.

Context

Sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance thrive in a society where 'others' are seen as the cause of inequality, lack of opportunities, and injustices, and crucially where ignorance of and about fellow citizens becomes immortalised as myth and history. Sectarianism kills. Society stagnates.

The founders of integrated education believed that by educating children together it would be possible to challenge the inevitability of another generation condemned to the violence and hopelessness which had become the norm for so many in Northern Ireland. With reconciliation as one of its core principles, integrated education encapsulated a vision of a 'united community' and courageously took those first faltering steps over thirty years ago. Pioneer schools such as Lagan and Hazelwood were a direct result of communities acting together to build a type of school that would foster good relations in shared spaces, and in some cases along interface areas. We in the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) feel well placed to contribute to ongoing discussions on building a united community.

Education a force for change

The role of education as a powerful force in transforming societies, not least those emerging from years of conflict, has been recognised and accepted globally. It is now equally understood that an education system that fails to deliver to all its participants the opportunities to develop to their full potential is a flawed system. Underachievement, where measured in terms of academic grades, is a major cause for concern among certain sections of Northern Irish society, most notably protestant working class boys. Latest findings highlight the widening gap in literacy and numeracy between the highest and lowest achievers in our schools, placing Northern Ireland even lower in international league tables of performance. The challenges presented by an increasingly diverse range of pupils demand more than ever

an inclusive system of education. We in NICIE believe that an integrated school offers the best means of dismantling the barriers and mitigating the marginalisation which contributes to intolerance and disunity in society. The multi-cultural Northern Ireland of the twenty-first century requires an educational system which reflects diversity and which aims to be a world leader in enabling every child to overcome disadvantage.

The educational status quo

Over ninety per cent of our children are divided in that they attend single identity schools; this sense of separateness is further exacerbated on returning home where similarly high numbers live in segregated housing resulting in limited exposure to other traditions and identities. While some progress has been made in developing the concept of shared education — and we in NICIE laud any progress in bringing our young people closer together — the collaboration involved and envisaged is based on a premise which 'accepts a religiously divided school system but tries to make the walls more porous by encouraging practical cooperation… It delivers educational benefits to its learners, promotes the effective use of resources and promotes equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion' (Community Relations Commission, *Peace Monitoring Report 2013*). The integrated model is the optimum model of sharing where togetherness is the everyday norm and not the exception, where the entitlement to be educated together is the norm, not an added experience.

The NICIE model

There are sixty two integrated schools educating together 22,000 children of different backgrounds and beliefs.

The model of integrated education, with its emphasis on an all-ability, co-educational experience, has been developed as a contribution towards peace and reconciliation. As such, this model is much admired and sought after by many countries experiencing division and conflict. Educators from Bosnia, Croatia, Macedonia, Israel, Turkey and others have visited our schools, shared experiences and developed similar initiatives in their own societies.

Bringing children of all faiths and no faiths together in a school community in a planned way

where they learn to understand and respect each other's difference is a key characteristic. Each child's identity and religious and cultural background is recognized and valued. Children are encouraged to take pride in and celebrate their own cultural and religious identities and to learn about and respect the diverse identities of their classmates. The planned integrated experience ensures that every child is equipped to live and work in an increasingly diverse world. The impact that attending an integrated school can have on wider society has also been documented: 'individuals who attend integrated schools are significantly more likely to have friends and neighbours from across the divide and these friendship networks translate into a more optimistic view of future community relations' (B.C. Hayes and I. McAllister, 'Education as a Mechanism for Conflict Resolution).

Research

Other research supports the 'individual change' theory which suggests that peace comes through the transformative change of a critical mass of individuals and the 'healthy relationships and connections' theory which suggests that peace emerges out of a process of breaking down isolation, polarisation, division, prejudice and stereotypes between and among groups. Our experience of integrating catholic and protestant children together shows that education can impact positively on identity, out group attitudes and forgiveness, and promote a less sectarian outlook. There is also evidence that it moderates children's political attitudes and creates cross community group friendships that can be carried forward into the community (McGlynn).

The benefits of integrated education are clearly understood by academics and formal educators as well as international political leaders. As President Obama said on a recent visit to Northern Ireland: 'Because issues like segregated schools and housing, lack of jobs and opportunity — symbols of history that are a source of pride for some and pain for others — these are not tangential to peace; they are essential to it. If towns remain divided — if catholics have their schools and buildings and protestants have theirs — if we can't see ourselves in one another — if fear or resentment are allowed to harden — that encourages division. It discourages cooperation. Ultimately peace is not just about politics it is about attitudes, about a sense of empathy.'

Public opinion

Public opinion polls show consistently high levels of support. A *Belfast Telegraph/Lucid Poll* (February 2013) found that seventy seven per cent of parents would support a request for their child's school to become integrated and sixty nine per cent agreed an integrated school was the best preparation for living in a diverse society. Business leaders and world leaders also share the view that a major step forward in unlocking the potential for Northern Irish society involves the ending of our segregated system of education, our 'benign apartheid'.

A more recent poll (*Belfast Telegraph/Lucid Poll*, June 2013) found more than two thirds surveyed believed that our education system perpetuates division in society. A similar number believed Northern Ireland politicians must prioritise the ending of the segregated system with over fifty per cent stating that politicians should set clear target dates for the complete desegregation of the system. In 2013, 700 children (16.5% of those who applied) were refused a place in an integrated school of their choice.

Seventy seven per cent polled thought that Northern Ireland's international image would be improved by having a single education system while eighty two per cent thought the international community should encourage our politicians to desegregate the system.

Clearly political support for the segregated educational status quo is out of step not just with international opinion but with the views of the electorate. This inquiry into building a united community should play an important part in persuading OFM/DFM to implement the structural change necessary in our education system to build a united community.

Recent developments

We in NICIE have been heartened by the recent judicial review finding initiated by Drumragh Integrated College, Omagh, which clarified Article 64 of the Education Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 1989 in stating the responsibility of government to 'encourage and facilitate Integrated education' and we welcomed the minister of education's support in the assembly for a motion to place Article 64 at the heart of educational planning.

Opportunities have been missed to tackle head-on the segregated system through area based planning, while the process of transformation remains difficult. Despite a background of financial restrain and concern about the cost of duplication of provision, the pace of change is

slow. The Peace Monitoring Report for 2013 noted that on current trends it would take another 499 years for all Northern Ireland schools to become integrated.

It is recognised that many schools in Northern Ireland offer genuine opportunities to pupils to meet and share learning experiences with those of a different background and early evaluations have shown that there are some positive benefits for those involved. Similarly policy documents such as *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity* (CRED) are important resources for advancing a more inclusive curriculum within schools.

NICIE wants to build on such good practice and in doing so has developed the Positive Partnership for Integration Initiative (PPInt). This initiative will provide the opportunity for those schools who wish to further develop their capacity to build partnerships to explore and celebrate diversity; to share and deepen good practice; to share learning resources; to validate their commitment to recognising and celebrating the diversity of their school community — in order to 'help children and young people to learn, understand and respect one and other and their different customs and traditions, and prepare them to live together in harmony in adult life' (CRED 2.1). This initiative will allow increasing numbers of schools to be recognised as being integrated in ethos. This initiative has the potential to move Northern Ireland beyond a segregated system of education to an integrated system which allows for a plurality of school types committed to collaboration and sharing.

NICIE contends that the development of such a system with a focus on educational strategies in the area of diversity, equality and promotion of community relations is one pre-requisite for creating the conditions in which inward investment, business confidence, increased employment, training opportunities and entrepreneurship will be enhanced and sustained in the context of contributing to 'Together, Building a United Community'.

NICIE would also call on courageous (decisive) action to follow the recommendations in the international review panel on teacher education in Northern Ireland, one of which is to establish an inclusive centre of excellence to train our young teachers to help build a united and prosperous community.

Good practice at the interface

The Hazelwood schools in North Belfast offer an example of how children can experience first class education against a background of community division and conflict and how the schools can reach out into the communities and contribute to better community relations for the benefit of all who live in them.

Over 450 children attend Hazelwood integrated primary, fifty per cent of whom are entitled to free school meals, thirty per cent being identified as special needs, eight per cent being registered as having a disability. Over ten per cent are newcomer children. As in all integrated schools, religious and cultural events of all children are celebrated not just at assemblies but through curricular activities within the classroom. Families are encouraged to participate and, when feasible, so too are others from the local community. Issues of identity and difference are explored and discussed. In 2013, whole school celebrations were held to mark the Queen's Jubilee. Gaelic sports are offered, pupils are involved in projects with Irish medium schools, and the history of the protestant community and its links with the Irish language is also studied. Over the years, the school has been the location for regular faith worship of the Bahai community, is a centre for sporting and leisure classes in the evenings and weekends, and has acted as a centre for mediation when tensions have developed among local groups. It is ironic that Hazelwood integrated primary school serving as it does the children of divided North Belfast remains the only school in the world to be scarred with a 'peace' wall in its grounds.

The inquiry of this committee presents an opportunity to promote positive change. The education system has a significant role to play in shaping such change. We need to ensure that the long term process of building a peaceful united community is served not hindered by our educational system. Our system must shape the future we wish to see.

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Submission to the Committee for the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister

10 October 2014

Introduction

The office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) was created in accordance with 'The Commissioner for Children and Young People (Northern Ireland) Order' (2003) to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people. The age remit of the office is children from birth up to18 years, or 21 years of age if a child is care experienced or has a disability. NICCY references its work within the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other relevant child rights instruments.

Scope of NICCY submission

Recognising the wide ranging nature of the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry, this submission will focus on '*recommendations to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community'*, through consideration of the Executive's Strategy: 'Together: Building a United Community'.

General comments on Together, Building a United Community

The Commissioner welcomed the publication of Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) when it was published last year. Addressing the sectarian and racist divisions within our society is critical if we are collectively to flourish and overcome the divisions of our troubled past. Delays in the development of this strategy have caused concern, and we note that, while a draft document, Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI), was consulted on in 2010, many aspects of T:BUC were not contained in CSI and so were not consulted on. Moreover, there did not appear to be a process within government of working across departments and their agencies to ensure that the Strategy integrated with other initiatives and programmes, for example the NEETs .

However, since publication, NICCY is aware of considerable effort put in to engaging with stakeholders from within government as well as NGOs and the public in relation to taking forward some of this work.

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Role of children and young people in addressing divisions

The Commissioner notes that the document recognises children and young people as a priority area and commits to directing resources towards particularly marginalised children and young people living in interface areas. However, the wording of the first shared aim focuses on the need to address negative attitudes on the part of 'our children and young people':

> '*To continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.'*

This aim suggests that young people (or children and young people) have negative attitudes that are in some way responsible for the community divisions in Northern Ireland. This is consistent with the draft strategy, CSI, which also negatively stereotyped of children and young people.

The Commissioner believes that it is extremely problematic for this objective to remain unchanged within T:BUC, given that children and young people are the only part of Northern Ireland society that does not hold some level of blame for the past, as none were born before the 1994 ceasefire.

It is appropriate instead to recognise the important part children and young people play in building a new society, in which sectarian divisions and violence is less dominant. Indeed, children and young people are generally very passionate about the need to overcome the divisions within society, as can be seen the responses to a question in the 2007 Young Life and Times Survey in which they were asked to write about the type of society they wanted Northern Ireland to be in the future. (See Appendix 1)

Indeed, other parts of the Strategy recognise the huge contribution children and young people can make in the future, and the problems of young people being blamed for society's problems:

> *'This strategy does not view young people as a negative influence but instead recognised the potential they hold for the future...' (p34)*

> *'However, we do recognise that society can at times vilify youth and blame them for community problems...' (p81)*

It is critical that the first Shared Aim of the Strategy is rewritten to focus instead on the huge contribution make to society, and may make to overcoming the divisions of the past. However, it is also critical to recognise the responsibility of all within society to deal with the past, particularly those in political leadership. This cannot be delegated to the youngest and most disempowered.

Role of political leadership in addressing divisions

It is noticeable that there is little reference in T:BUC to the role of politicians in overcoming divisions, other than through departmental implementation of the Strategy. Instead of seeking to place responsibility on those who were not born before the ceasefires, political leaders must take responsibility for dealing with the past, through delivering effective governance, and fully meeting the commitments contained in the Belfast Agreement, and subsequent St Andrews Agreement. This includes reaching compromise in relation to highly divisive issues including parades and flags, and also working together in coalition to deliver effective governance for all the people of Northern Ireland.

In conclusion, children and young people are severely impacted by the continuing sectarian divisions, and have an important role to play in building a more tolerant and inclusive society. However, the key role for addressing our conflicted past lies with Northern Ireland's elected representatives, and it is their responsibility to deliver on the commitments made in the Belfast Agreement and St Andrews Agreement.

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Appendix 1: Responses to question in 2007 Young Life and Times survey: 'What sort of society (do) you want Northern Ireland to be in the future.

Methodology

The data utilised in this research emerged from the 2007 Young Life and Times survey, carried out by ARK, a joint project between the Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster. This survey records the attitudes and values of young people living in Northern Ireland. The edition of the survey used in this paper illustrates the views of young people who celebrated their 16th birthday in February 2007. A letter was sent to all eligible 16 year olds and of the 1,925 letters sent out, 627 responses were received. The data was collected between 10th August and 30th September 2007 using a questionnaire which was completed by respondents online, by telephone or on paper. The survey asked respondents a range of questions on a variety of issues including education, poverty, family and politics. The open-ended question to which respondents provided feedback read:

"The new Assembly has the potential to shape the future for our society. Please use the space below to say what sort of society you want Northern Ireland to be in the future."

The data was categorised by analyzing the words which appeared most frequently in the responses and then grouped accordingly under a number of headings.

Overview

In response to this question, some young people identified one specific suggestion which they felt would improve society in Northern Ireland whilst others identified two or more issues. The key issues which they felt should be addressed were peace, equality, safety, poverty, the economy and service provision.

The responses provided presented largely optimistic views about the future of society in Northern Ireland. 96% of young people surveyed conveyed that they hoped that Northern Ireland had a positive future regarding issues such as peace, safety and discrimination.

Analysis of responses

In responding to the question, 627 young people provided the following answers and feedback.

Peace

The most popular response received from the young people was "peace" with 23% of respondents highlighting that they would like to see a more peaceful society for Northern Ireland in the future. The words "peace" and "peaceful" were frequently placed alongside variations of the other most common responses such as "productive", "safe" and "community". This suggests that to these young people, peace does not only mean freedom from religious dispute and economic struggle, but also from racial tension.

"*A peaceful and productive society, in which people of all religions and races can live successfully amongst each other"*

"A peaceful one, where there is no more tension between the two communities and all past events are forgotten"

"A more peaceful community, as in no divides between Protestants and Catholics, e.g all schools made to be integrated so people are more open-minded"

"A peaceful society where young people can be taken as seriously as adults. People could feel safe to walk down any road without feeling threatened or in danger"

Discrimination and Equality

Another area frequently identified in the research was equality and specifically the presence of discrimination within society. 19% of respondents agreed that there should be "less discrimination" and 15% used the term "equality." A number of respondents expressed a need for more cross-community schemes or initiatives to ensure that people from "both sides" (Protestant and Catholic communities) could live and work in the same areas. Eighteen young people expressed a concern that there should be a greater focus towards ensuring that civil rights are properly implemented in Northern Ireland. Other recurring responses included, "no prejudice", "fair", "multi-cultural", "no boundaries", "less segregation" ,"respect" and "diverse."

The majority of the responses relating to discrimination and equality were positive and indicated that they would like to see a more inclusive society in Northern Ireland. Only five respondents stated that "there should be less foreign workers."

Safety

Safety was also a key concern for the young people who participated in the survey. 17% responded that they would like Northern Ireland to be a safer society. 11% stated that they felt that there should be less violence and that more needed to be done to ensure that crime rates in Northern Ireland are lowered. There was a particular concern regarding drugs with a significant number of young people linking crime rates with drugs.

"NI currently contains too much violence and disturbances. The amount of young offenders is on the increase as they have nothing to do and so turn to drink, drugs and violence. These issues should be tackled in order for people to feel safe in their homes."

"I would like society to be a safe for children and adults. Also to be free from drugs and paramilitaries as these cause fights and deaths."

Six young people suggested that the current justice system did not provide adequate sentences and punishments for those found guilty of committing a crime. Four young people stated that in the future they would like to live in a society where they could wear their favourite sports team's jersey without having to cover it up in certain areas.

"I want NI to be peaceful and I would like to be able to walk over the town in ANY football top (Rangers) without thinking I will get attacked."

There was a mixed response regarding the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) role in building a better society in Northern Ireland. Some young people felt that there should be a greater police presence on the streets to prevent crime, whereas others felt that there should be less presence on the streets and that the PSNI should spend more time investigating "real" crimes.

"I would want NI to be a safe place to be and I feel the PSNI spend more time trying to round up teenagers than solving more dangerous crimes, I could go on... "

"I would like there to be more peace in more communities where Protestants and Catholics live together, for example no flags on the twelfth or marches where Catholics live."

"The younger generation should be more tolerant of other cultures and people with disabilities or who are disfigured. Also, flags such as Nationalist/Unionist should be

removed from streets as these can be intimidating and encourage extremist views on cultures."

"A society free from sectarianism, free from flags on lampposts and paint on curbs. One where religion does not determine where you live, what school you go to and who your friends are."

"A safe and clean environment that children can be brought up in. No more arguments or fights over religion, race etc. Hopefully for the society not to be divided by a bridge or flags. For there to be integration in estates between Protestants and Catholics"

"Equal rights for all people. To be able to go anywhere without feeling intimidated by flags and bunting etc."

In this research only five young people directly mentioned the impact of flags and parades on society in Northern Ireland. The small number highlighting flags and parades would suggest that these were not significant issues in young people's minds at the time of the survey in 2007.

Poverty

Five percent of young people expressed concern about poverty and homelessness levels in Northern Ireland and many said that they felt that a "classless" society would be better. The volume of responses which highlight poverty as a key issue suggests that some of the respondents may have been personally affected by poverty, or knew of others who had been affected.

"For our society it should be equal and there should be more help for families who suffer poverty"

"A "more happy" NI, so to speak. I know that there is not a lot of unhappiness in NI but I feel that people should be made more aware of the level of homelessness that actually is here..."

The Economy

A number of young people surveyed expressed concerns about the state of the economy in Northern Ireland. Eight percent of participants wanted Northern Ireland to be prosperous

and felt that there were not enough opportunities currently available for young people. Twenty-five young people hoped that the future of Northern Ireland would be "better for young people."

"A society where there is enough jobs for young people and a better economy"

Fifteen young people felt that the reputation of Northern Ireland worldwide and within the UK could be improved. Eight of these young people felt that more should be done to promote tourism which should boost the economy.

"Northern Ireland should become a more inviting place, at the moment tourism is the main idea that people are promoting, but I believe that the tourism industry will not be a sustainable one if attractions are not put in place"

"A place with a better reputation than its current standing. Somewhere people can be that bit prouder to say "I'm from there.""

Provision of Services

Service provision across a number of sectors was addressed by the young people who took part in the survey. There were specific concerns from 16 young people that general services were not available for teenagers and in the future they would like to see more provision in place.

"I would like there to be more stuff for teenagers to do, as there is currently nothing in my area and many my age hang about in the street."

There were a number of issues raised regarding educational provision. Thirteen young people suggested that there should be more integrated schools so that communities are encouraged to mix at a young age. Eleven young people felt that access to higher education was prohibitive for some due to rising costs. Two young people expressed the opinion that grammar schools should remain part of the education system in Northern Ireland. One participant requested that there should be more education about sexual identity and another proposed that:

"[There should be an] Education system which offers a wide range of subjects to cater for

all children, with consideration for different abilities and limitations."

Health provision was another issue highlighted by a number of respondents. Fourteen young people felt that Northern Ireland needed better health provision.

"It will be a society where everyone has access to free and efficient health care."

Five stated that care given to pensioners was inadequate. Two young people stated that they felt that abortion should not be allowed under any circumstances. Two young people felt that transport in Northern Ireland needed to be improved.

Atmosphere

A number of young people indicated that the atmosphere and attitudes in Northern Ireland needed to change. All of the young people who provided responses of this kind implied that they would like to see the general pervasive mood in Northern Ireland become more positive. Twenty-nine young people expressed a desire for society to be "more happy", 22 felt that society should be "more friendly" and five used the term "more kind." Other responses in this field include: "more relaxed", "modern" and "mature."

"Happy. Everybody gets on with everyone. Enjoyable."

Environment

Fifteen young people stated that they would like to see Northern Ireland become more "clean" and in addition, six young people said that they felt that Northern Ireland should be more environmentally friendly. Two participants felt that there should be more protecting animals.

"An environmentally friendly society is very important which uses renewable energy. Cutting down on litter is essential and all animals and their habitats need to be protected."

Other Responses

Some of the responses received did not fit neatly into a particular policy area. These addressed a range of issues.

Eight young people felt that Northern Ireland should remain part of Great Britain, three felt that there should be a United Ireland and four said that Northern Ireland should be an

independent country.

"Peaceful, united, independent society to feel safe in"

Four young people expressed concerns regarding the rates of child abuse in Northern Ireland and felt that these should be reduced. One simply stated that they wanted Northern Ireland to be "cool" and "Northern Ireland should be shaped according to God's law." Other miscellaneous comments suggested that Northern Ireland should be "co-operative", "have more Asian shops" and "socialism." Only one respondent claimed that "Northern Ireland won't get better."

Northern Ireland Environment Link

Inquiry into Building a United Community (Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister)

Comments by

Northern Ireland Environment Link

26th September 2014

Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) is the networking and forum body for non-statutory organisations concerned with the environment of Northern Ireland. Its 65 Full Members represent over 90,000 individuals, 262 subsidiary groups, have an annual turnover of £70 million and manage over 314,000 acres of land. Members are involved in environmental issues of all types and at all levels from the local community to the global environment. NIEL brings together a wide range of knowledge, experience and expertise which can be used to help develop policy, practice and implementation across a wide range of environmental fields.

These comments are made on behalf of Members, but some members may be providing independent comments as well. If you would like to discuss these comments further we would be delighted to do so.

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Summary:

- A significant body of research exists that demonstrates that the environment is a key factor in building community cohesion;
- We would suggest that natural shared spaces, green infrastructure and recognition of the services that flow to society from the environment ('ecosystem services') should be embedded in public policy;
- Heritage sites and buildings should be promoted as venues for shared experience – the public should be encouraged to explore and engage with shared heritage, providing a fresh perspective on the present;
- Environmental education is a key way of promoting the integration of young people across communities in shared green spaces and natural/built heritage sites around Northern Ireland;
- We recommend strategic investment in environmental enhancement to provide well-designed and maintained public spaces (with all the social and community benefits that they bring), for example, rolling out the ideas underpinning the Connswater Community Greenway across Belfast and NI;
- Better integration of land and transport planning across Northern Ireland will make steps towards dealing with social exclusion and providing better-functioning spaces.

1. Northern Ireland Environment Link (NIEL) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community. By way of introduction, we would emphasise the very important role that the environment and heritage can play in the development of shared spaces and services, and ultimately in building a united community in NI. Enhancing the environment, in terms of public space, has been shown to have a positive impact on, for example, social cohesion and inclusion, with an associated reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour. When designed and maintained well, shared public spaces can bring communities together, provide meeting places, and foster the kind of social community building that can so easily get lost in our urban areas. Well-designed spaces and places shape the culture of an area and help to inform the identity of local communities. We recommend that **green infrastructure be promoted as a key mechanism for achieving multiple policy objectives across a wide range of Departments – not least because of its potential for bringing communities together**.
   Specific elements of the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry are dealt with below.

2. *Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:*
   An examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services.
   2.1 Green shared space is recognised as a key factor in developing a **sense of community**[1] - it provides us with venues for **neighbourliness and social cohesion.** Access to open and green spaces gives us a valuable chance to socialise with neighbours and others with whom we would not otherwise come into contact. Well-designed and maintained shared green space in urban areas is known to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, contributing to the establishment of stable societies[2].
   2.2 In any attempt to build a more united community in Northern Ireland, our children are crucial. How children connect with the environment, and with other children in that context, can have profound implications for how they develop. Outdoor play and recreation helps to develop children's social skills (including, for example, dealing with confrontation, language and comprehension, physical ability)[3]. Increasing our networks of green areas to enable safe outdoor leisure time in shared cross-community spaces represents a significant positive investment in our young people and a shared future.
   2.3 Shared green spaces can also promote social cohesion by being used as venues for **social events** – food and music festivals have seen great success in places such as Botanic Gardens (Belfast), Ebrington Square (Derry-Londonderry), Oxford Island, Crawfordsburn Country Park, and many more.
   2.4 **People want to use green spaces and wild places**. There is evidence to demonstrate that the more people use public spaces, the more they are satisfied with them and value

[1] CABE Space. (2004). Manifesto for Better Public Spaces
[2] http://www.csd.org.uk/uploadedfiles/files/value_of_green_space_report.pdf
[3] https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-public-space.pdf; http://www.edphis.org.uk/Report_on_Place_and_Children.pdf

them, leading to a developed sense of civic pride[4]. Furthermore, people are more likely to use shared spaces if they are 'natural' in character[5].

2.5 'Green infrastructure' is a term used to describe green spaces, generally in urban environments, that are used to deliver solutions to social and environmental problems. Green infrastructure is incredibly valuable to society because of the services that it delivers (for example, shared recreation space with associated health and social benefits, safe active travel routes, and environmental benefits such as flood alleviation). We recommend that **green infrastructure be promoted as a key mechanism for achieving multiple policy objectives across a wide range of Departments – not least because of its potential for bringing communities together**. The Connswater Community Greenway (coordinated by the East Belfast Partnership) is an exemplar of what can be achieved – it is a great success story and has the potential to transform its surrounding area, changing how people move around portions of the city and utilise the shared space in their own neighbourhood. NIEL would recommend exploring ways in which this project could be replicated in other areas of Northern Ireland. Funding for the Connswater Community Greenway came from a wide range of sources, each recognising the great benefit of investing in such a scheme.

2.6 Heritage (the historic environment) and education can play an important role in shared space and building a united community[6]. The 'heritage perspective' can often change attitudes to the present day – when we gain an historic appreciation of how society functioned (well or otherwise) it can have a positive impact on how we view the society in which we live now. We have a very rich heritage environment in Northern Ireland – one that, looking beyond previous decades of trouble, can provide a **sense of shared heritage** – both natural and built/historic. We would strongly endorse the efforts of NIEA in producing their forward-looking Historic Environment Strategy, which makes that heritage central to the prosperity of our society.

2.7 Sustainable transport is an important issue for building cohesion in and across communities (and is linked to the idea of green infrastructure, explored above). Increasing sustainable and active travel has been shown to foster a sense of social inclusion – car ownership rates in Belfast suggest that many inner city families are very restricted in the spaces that they use, and suffer from social exclusion as a result. Furthermore, it has been shown that in areas of heavy traffic, sense of community can become eroded – people living in heavy traffic areas are more likely to consider the boundaries of their home as 'their territory', rather than reaching out into the broader neighbourhood. In planning for a united community in Northern Ireland, **it is important that spatial/land use planning and transport planning become more coordinated/integrated**.

2.8 We would emphasise the importance of initiatives such as the **NIEA Challenge Fund** in building sense of community and civic pride. One clear example of this is the 'Suffolk

[4] CABE Space. (2010). Urban Green Nation: Building the Evidence Base
[5] https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/the-value-of-public-space.pdf
[6] https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/imported-docs/p-t/putting-historic-environment-to-work.pdf

Interface Pocket Plots' project. This project sought to develop cross-community plots on the interface zone between the Suffolk estate and Suffolk Crescent/Ladybrook area, and will eventually include a gardening and tool library, rainwater harvesting, a communal polytunnel and a pond. The project benefited from the Challenge Fund scheme in providing technical expertise.

There are many more examples of Challenge Fund projects working towards the enhancement of community cohesion. In the West Belfast Alleyways Project, local residents transformed their alleyways into attractive, safe and environmental friendly spaces for the local community. In Burrenbridge, a 2.5 acre community field was transformed into five zones with different uses addressing the needs of the local community – a garden for the elderly, a family recreation space, a community vegetable garden, a fruit garden, and a wildlife area. This new space will contribute to building a sense of community and neighbourliness within the local area.

3. *Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:*

   Examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration.

   3.1 We would emphasise the important opportunity for **Community Planning** in Local Government Reform. In the new two-tier planning system, structures will be in place whereby communities can become more involved in the development of the vision for their council area, and in its implementation. They can and should be part of decision making in the design of shared spaces and services that different communities can be comfortable with. We recommend that government grasps the opportunity presented by Community Planning, encouraging Local Councils to engage fully with the new processes in the planning system, which we hope will lead to the design of high quality spaces and places in Northern Ireland – something that will lead to greater community cohesion in the ways discussed above.

4. *Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community.*

   NIEL recommends that:

   4.1 The environment is recognised as a key factor in building community cohesion;

   4.2 Natural shared spaces, green infrastructure and recognition of the services that flow to society from the environment ('ecosystem services') be embedded in public policy;

   4.3 Heritage sites and buildings are promoted as shared spaces for all, and that the public are encouraged to explore and engage with shared heritage as a fresh perspective on the present;

4.4 Environmental education is recognised as a key way of promoting the integration of young people across communities in shared green spaces and natural/built heritage sites around Northern Ireland;

4.5 There should be strategic investment in environmental enhancement to provide well designed and maintained public spaces (with all the social and community benefits that they bring), for example, rolling out the ideas underpinning the Connswater Community Greenway across Belfast and NI;

4.6 There is better integration of land and transport planning across Northern Ireland, making steps towards dealing with social exclusion and providing better-functioning spaces.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

NI Housing Executive's Response to Inquiry into Together; Building a United Community

Introduction

The Housing Executive welcomes the opportunity to submit this response to the Committee of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister as part of the consultation process relating to the Government's Together Building a United Community Strategy.

It is the Housing Executive's perception that the Inquiry seeks to undertake the following:

1. Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:

    - An examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
    - Consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services.

2. Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:

    - Seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
    - Examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relations to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
    - Consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.

3. Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

The Housing Executive hopes that the following may assist the Committee in its undertakings and is happy to provide any follow-up information should this be required:

Response

1. **Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations training including:**

- **An examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;**
- **Consideration of best practice both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together and in developing shared space and shared services.**

The Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Unit was established in 2004 to deliver the organisation's Good Relations Strategy including to deliver shared housing where it is 'practicable, desirable and safe'. The Strategy is delivered within five themes;

- Residential Segregation and Integration
- Flags, Emblems & Sectional Symbols
- Race Relations
- Interface Areas
- Communities in Transition
-

All Housing Executive good relations work is delivered under existing Housing Executive budgets with funding from the Department for Social Development rather than the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister's Good Relations budget.

Residential Segregation and Integration

Under the Residential Segregation and Integration theme the Housing Executive has adopted a twin track approach. The Shared New Build Programme under which every new build scheme is considered for its shared potential which, since 2006, has delivered 11 shared new build schemes. The unique feature of these schemes is a 'voluntary charter' where new tenants sign up to a set of principles and values to respect difference in their community.

The Housing Executive has also been actively promoting the concept of sharing within its existing housing estates which are still deeply segregated some 15 years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. NIHE estates are 90% single identity, with this figure rising to 94% in Belfast. In 2008, funded by the International Fund for Ireland, the Housing Executive designed and delivered the Shared Neighbourhood Programme with the aim of securing and protecting shared neighbourhoods across NI and producing a 'ripple effect' of sharing. Thirty estates agreed to participate in this Programme and it now includes around 60,000 people. The programme was the subject of a very positive evaluation and at DSD's request; it was mainstreamed in 2011 as the Shared Communities Programme. This programme developed a further 20 Housing Executive estates as shared communities.

The Housing Executive has now been tasked with delivering a further 10 shared new build schemes under the TBUC agenda and is establishing criteria for selection and delivery of these schemes in order to meet these required outcomes.

Flags, Emblems & Sectional Symbols

Political and sectarian displays are prevalent within Housing Executive estates and are a form of marking out territory e.g. murals, flags, curb painting, bonfires and paramilitary memorials. Significant transformation of these displays has been made by using proactive negotiations and a local mediative approach and Housing Executive funding of re-imaging initiatives through the Community Cohesion Unit works with both sides of the community, at the communities pace.

This practice has shown that re-imaging work can be the catalyst for physical, social and economic regeneration, but it can only be successful when the community are at the heart of taking such initiatives forward.

A new approach to bonfire funding and management has been very successful with a record number of communities transforming their traditional bonfire celebrations into more family friendly and more acceptable celebrations of culture.

Race Relations

Under this theme the Housing Executive works to tackle and, where possible, develop positive interventions to all forms of hate crime. Race, challenging racial harassment and violence, ethnicity, diverse nationalities, migration, Traveller and Gypsy families are all very important issues and key elements that inform the Housing Executive's Race Relations Policy. We continue to develop our approach to these issues in the context of our Race Relations Strategy which was developed in line with the previous Race Equality Strategy and launched in 2005. It is the Housing Executive's intention to review this policy once the revised Race Equality Strategy is launched.

Interface Areas

This will be addressed under Theme 2.

Communities in Transition

Under this theme the Housing Executive currently develops intervention models for estates which are at risk of descending into inter or intra-community violence. We have a small budget which is used to support local estate based cohesion projects and these small scale; local good relations projects can have significant impact within communities.

Peace III

The Housing Executive successfully bid for £300,000 from Belfast City Council's Peace III funding which enabled us to deliver a further four shared communities in Belfast.

In addition, the Housing Executive, in partnership with the Rural Development Council and TIDES Training, successfully bid for £3.5m to deliver the very successful Building Relationships in Communities (BRIC) Programme.

Examples of Good Practice

BRIC Programme

This Peace III funded 4-year programme commenced in 2010 and was delivered under three main themes:

Changing Minds

A bespoke training programme, delivered by TIDES Training put Good Relations at the heart of the Housing Executive's policies and service delivery functions. The training was designed for staff in the Housing Executive to help the organisation achieve good relations outcomes out of all the work we undertake.

This training was delivered in a bottom up-top down approach and included the training of Board members, directors, policy staff and operational District staff. This training was also delivered to 88 estates across NI with a bursary of £5000 awarded upon completion of the course that allowed communities to deliver good relations projects in their areas.

Sharing Visions

This was intended to provide 2 interface communities with an interactive visioning tool to help communities visualise how their neighbourhoods could look without walls and barriers, to help them move forward and potentially removing sectarian barriers in their neighbourhoods.

This theme also conducted research into how 2 Urban Renewal Areas could be delivered in a manner that embeds community cohesion into the redevelopment process.

Crossing Borders

This research helped inform Housing Executive staff and partnering cross-border institutions on how to develop housing policy on a cross-border housing market delivery model in order to promote cross-border participation and integration in border housing market areas.

Programme Aims

The overall aim of the project was to build the institutional good relations capacity of the Housing Executive through a pilot service delivery model which aimed to empower staff to address the issues of Northern Ireland's segregated housing market.

Key outputs of the BRIC Programme

Description	
Changing Minds	
No of Courses delivered to NIHE staff	**183**
No of Mentoring Days	**359**
Reflective Practice Days	**176**
No of Beneficiaries	**2775**
No of NIHE staff trained	**1669**
Good Relations Plans established for estates	**85**
Residents/Community Associations participating in the Programme	**87**
Residents/Community Associations implementing GR projects	**83**
Residents/Community Associations trained in good relations	**87**
Community Change advocates trained	**21**
Murals re-imaged	**7**
Contentious memorials transformed	**3**

Practice around contentious memorials	**1**
Technical assessment of NIHE peace walls	**1**
EA on shared space	**1**
Community houses upgraded	**17**
Seminars	**3**
Sharing Visions	
Research report identifying 2 suitable interface areas for intervention	**1**
Suitable interface areas identified	**2**
3D visioning model developed	**1**
Crossing Borders	
Housing trends in border region research report	**1**
Cross-border steering housing committee established	**1**
Seminar	**1**

Shared Communities Programme

The Shared Communities Programme commenced in 2012 and was aimed at supporting and encouraging shared communities across Northern Ireland. The central purpose was 'To develop shared housing communities where people choose to live with others regardless of their religion or race, in a neighbourhood that is safe and welcoming to all, and threatening to no-one'. The programme focused on existing housing areas.

The Programme aims and objectives were:

- To establish a regional mechanism to provide an integrated and co-ordinated approach to support areas where diversity is welcomed
- To deliver 20 designated Shared Communities over a three year period to existing social housing areas identified through a selection process and community consultation
- To develop cohesive communities where people have a sense of belonging, where people from different backgrounds have similar life chances, where diversity is respected and where people from different backgrounds mix and do not have separate parallel lives
- To provide real opportunities for people who wish to live in shared communities
- To encourage shared communities to engage with their neighbouring estates to show best practice in shared housing
- To develop a community engaged in meaningful dialogue toward mutual understanding
- To draw out best practice to inform and influence the social policy framework and contribute to neighbourhood renewal and associated strategies and work towards any convergence of those strategies where added value can be achieved in doing so.

The Programme was a resounding success with 20 communities signing up to be shared communities. All of the communities underwent Good Relations training. All of them held joint events with communities from different backgrounds ranging from cultural to religious. All of them sought to understand their own culture before opening dialogue with those of different cultures. Taking part in the programme also provided the opportunity to develop community cohesion advocates who, in turn, are now mentoring other communities thus

achieving the 'ripple effect' objective of promoting sharing as the way forward and engaging with neighbouring estates to show best practice in shared housing. Various aspects of the programme in the form of employability training provided access to employment for some communities where unemployment levels were extremely high. Approximately 40,000 are now involved in the programme.

Sandy Row Re-imaging Project

The replacement of a highly contentious mural, depicting a gunman, at the entrance to Sandy Row provided a catalyst for growth in the area with 5 new shops opening in the weeks following the launch of the re-imaged mural.

Better Bonfires Initiative

The Housing Executive has a small fund to encourage communities to transform their traditional bonfire celebrations to more family friendly and more culturally acceptable celebrations. This programme has grown year on year with a record number of 32 applications to date this year. In order to deliver this initiative the Housing Executive works in partnership with local Councils and communities.

2. **Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:**

    - **Seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;**
    - **Examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and**
    - **Consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions**

There are 88 peace walls in Belfast, mostly within or adjacent to Housing Executive estates. 20 of these are in Housing Executive ownership. There are a further four peace walls in Derry/Londonderry and 2 in Portadown. The Housing Executive is represented on the cross-statutory/community advisory group which is chaired by the Department of Justice and is assisted by funding for the International Fund for Ireland who support local community groups to work towards barrier removal/modification. The Housing Executive also works with and provides support to communities who wish to remove or re-image barriers. To this end, through the BRIC project, we have developed a visioning tool on 2 DOJ interfaces and all 20 NIHE peace lines and we are currently in discussions with a number of communities on how these structures can be re-imagined, re-designed or removed. Through the visioning tool process our architects have shown groups what their areas can look like with the barriers removed. We are currently working with interface communities in North Belfast to see if some of these plans can be realised. A consultation process to define the feasibility of providing a 3D Visioning tool for use by interface communities in Derry/Londonderry is currently underway.

The Housing Executive has also been tasked with delivering the Normalisation Programme/Aftercare Package on behalf of DOJ. Work is required to NIHE owned homes

and private properties to allow the remodelling of the peace wall and to afford residents immediately adjacent to the interface barriers adequate security protection to their homes in the event of attacks resulting from the barrier removal. Work includes the removal of steel grills fitted to windows overlooking the interface and replacing this with toughened glass. Other minor works may also be required such as the provision of protection to oil tanks and work required will be assessed and determined for each location. These measures will provide the properties with security protection yet transform the appearance away from a heavily fortified security environment. This transformation to a more normalised society will be accompanied by ongoing community relations work within the communities affected and it is hoped, will lead to a truly peaceful post conflict NI society. Spend this year for such works is estimated to be in the region of £50k. This will bring the total NIHE spend on interface modification in year 2014/15 to approx. £200k.

The Housing Executive is a member of the Interface Advisory Group, tasked with taking forward barrier removal to interface structures and will continue to play an active role is contributing to the TBUC aim of removing all interface structures by 2023.

A key point for TBUC on interfaces is the very real need for a comprehensive regeneration strategy for each of the barrier locations as the security structures themselves are not all that is keeping the communities apart. The roads, vacant properties, empty spaces, derelict commercial properties and general blight and dereliction all need to be addressed in order to effect a real change in people's behaviour at interface locations. This is why it is essential that a joined up regeneration plan is devised for each of the areas, with the community at the heart, driving forward the project.

3. **Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers**

The Housing Executive believes that tackling sectarianism and racism should be at the heart of all public policy and delivery. Good relations should not just be a side issue but should be central to everything we do in the public service.

All good relations programmes should have the community at the very centre of it and all programmes must look at how the community can be the key catalyst for change in our post conflict society.

Regeneration must be a key driver in all good relations work, with projects providing a transformative outcome for the communities in which they operating in order to deliver real change for our society.

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister inquiry on Building a United Community

Summary

Introduction

The NIHRC advises the Committee:

(para 10) to consider the following relevant documents published by the NIHRC:

The Derry/Londonderry report on Upholding the Human Rights to Culture in Post Conflict Societies'[1];
Parades and Protests in Northern Ireland'[2]
The Display of Flags, Symbols and Emblems in Northern Ireland'[3]; and,
'Dealing with Northern Ireland's Past: Towards a Transitional Justice Approach'[4]

(para 16) examine the mechanisms put in place by the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities to ensure the effective participation of rights holders in the processes of implementing T: BUC.

(para 20) that human rights should not have been reduced to 'principles' within T: BUC, they are binding legal obligations on the basis of which the NI Executive has corresponding duties. This should be addressed by the OFMdFM and the legality of human rights expressly acknowledged in any future legislation.

[1] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/culture_report_final.pdf
[2]http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/110720_NIHRC_Parades_and_Protests_in_NI_REPORT_cover_inners_Single_Col_V3_LOW.pdf
[3]http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/104020_NIHRC_The_Display_of_Flags_Single_Column_V7_Final_Low_Res.pdf
[4] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/NIHRC_Transitional_Justice_Report.pdf

(para 26) that T: BUC affords insufficient attention to the framework established by human rights law. Appropriate consideration of the relevant treaties and related soft law should therefore be evidenced by the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities responsible for the development and implementation of T: BUC.

(para 37) that the working definition of sectarianism in T: BUC conflates 'attitudes', with actions such as 'threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour'. It does not make clear that such actions may be prohibited by domestic law and subject to criminal sanctions. The Committee should seek to have this confusion addressed, taking into consideration the NI Executive's duty to prohibit sectarianism in accordance with human rights standards.

(para 43) that T: BUC does not sufficiently engage with the recommendations of the ICERD committee, nor does it reflect appropriately the definition of racism provided by the ECRI. The Committee should seek an assurance from the OFMdFM that this deficiency will be addressed.

(para 44) that any future legislation should ensure that a definition of sectarianism in domestic law is premised upon the ECRI definition of racism.

(para 54) to consider the relationship between the domestic concept of good relations and the framework of intercultural dialogue set out by the CoE and UN human rights treaty bodies. The Committee should recommend that the OFMdFM restate its position, acknowledging that T: BUC sits within this internationally accepted framework.

(para 55) that the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities responsible for the implementation of T: BUC should develop policies and programme for delivery that adopt the framework of intercultural dialogue and recognise its relation to the domestic concept of good relations.

(para 62) that the wording of the legal requirement to 'have regard to the desirability' to promote good relations is not fully in accordance with the obligation to take 'immediate and effective measures'.

(para 63) to recommend that domestic legislation be amended and strengthened to comply with human rights laws and standards. As a minimum, all public authorities should be required to take 'immediate and effective measures' to promote good relations.

(para 69) to recommend broadening the scope of application required by Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

(para 70) to recommend that the domestic duty to promote good relations be extended to six additional protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; sex; and sexual orientation.

(para 74) to assure itself that the proposed Equality and Good Relations Commission will be able to, and can, effectively carry out its functions. Any structural changes must be made with the express objective of increasing the protection and promotion of equality, non-discrimination, tolerance, mutual respect and understanding. There should be no retrogression from protections afforded by the existing structural arrangements of the ECNI and Community Relations Council.



The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister inquiry on Building a United Community

Introduction

1. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) pursuant to Section 69 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, reviews the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice relating to the protection of Human Rights.[5] In accordance with this function the following statutory advice is submitted to Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) on its inquiry into 'Building a United Community.'

2. The NIHRC bases its advice on the full range of internationally accepted human rights standards, including the European Convention on Human Rights as incorporated by the Human Rights Act 1998 and the treaty obligations of the Council of Europe (CoE) and United Nations (UN) systems. The relevant international treaties in this context include:

- the CoE European Convention on Human Rights, 1950 (ECHR)[6];
- the CoE Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)[7];
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)[8];
- the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)[9];
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)[10];
- the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)[11];

[5] Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 69(1).
[6] Ratified by the UK in 1951.
[7] Ratified by the UK in 1998.
[8] Ratified by the UK in 1976.
[9] Ratified by the UK in 1969.
[10] Ratified by the UK in 1976.

- the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)[12];
- the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)[13];
- the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.[14]

3. The Northern Ireland Executive (NI Executive) is subject to the obligations contained within these international treaties by virtue of the United Kingdom (UK) Government's ratification. In addition, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, section 26 (1) provides that 'if the Secretary of State considers that any action proposed to be taken by a Minister or Northern Ireland department would be incompatible with any international obligations... he may by order direct that the proposed action shall not be taken.'

4. The NIHRC further recalls that the Northern Ireland Act 1998, section 24(1) states that 'a Minister or Northern Ireland department has no power to make, confirm or approve any subordinate legislation, or to do any act, so far as the legislation or act – (a) is incompatible with any of the Convention rights'.

5. In addition to these treaty standards there exists a body of 'soft law' developed by the human rights bodies of the UN and CoE. These declarations and principles are non-binding but provide further guidance in respect of specific areas. The relevant standards in this context are:

- UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities;
- UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action;
- UN Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18 on combatting intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief;
- UNESCO Declaration of Principles on Tolerance;
- CoE Recommendation No. R(97)20 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on "Hate Speech";
- CoE European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) General Policy Recommendation 1 on Combatting Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance;
- CoE ECRI General Policy Recommendation 2 on Specialised Bodies to Combat Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance at the National Level;

[11] Ratified by the UK in 1986.
[12] Ratified by the UK in 1991
[13] Ratified by the UK in 2009
[14] Ratified by the UK in 2007

- CoE ECRI General Policy Recommendation 7 on National Legislation to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination;
- Yogyakarta Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity 2007[15]
- Fribourg Declaration on Cultural Rights.

6. The NIHRC notes the terms of reference for the Committee's inquiry. In particular, it recognises the stated purpose 'to inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance; and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making'. The NIHRC also recognises that the OFMdFM strategy 'Together: Building a United Community' (T: BUC) is the principal means through which the NI Executive seeks to address the issues under consideration by the Committee.

7. The publication of T: BUC was welcomed by the NIHRC as a policy initiative aimed at improving community relations and the wider aim of building a united and shared society. [16] The promotion of a respectful and tolerant society is a human rights obligation. A strategy that seeks to deliver this outcome requires careful consideration in the context of a post conflict society, but where some continue to advocate and use violence undermining the rule of law, and where continuing community divisions limit respect, protection and the fulfilment of human rights.

8. T: BUC recognised that 'more work needs to be done to resolve the challenging legacy of our past and… committed to showing political leadership.' The strategy led to the establishment of an 'All-Party Group, with an independent chair to consider parades and protests; flags, symbols and emblems and related matters; and the past.'[17]

9. The work of the All-Party Group has not resulted in an agreement and matters remain to be addressed. However, the NIHRC did provide advice to the Group and **the Committee's attention is therefore drawn to the following relevant documents:**

[15] The Principles were developed and unanimously adopted by a distinguished group of human rights experts, from diverse regions and backgrounds, including judges, academics, a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Special Procedures, members of treaty bodies, NGOs and others.
[16] http://www.nihrc.org/news/detail/chief-commissioner-responds-to-the-united-community-strategy
[17] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf para. 1.48

'The Derry/Londonderry report on Upholding the Human Rights to Culture in Post Conflict Societies'[18];
'Parades and Protests in Northern Ireland'[19];
'The Display of Flags, Symbols and Emblems in Northern Ireland'[20]; and,
'Dealing with Northern Ireland's Past: Towards a Transitional Justice Approach'[21]

Participation

10. Previous draft strategies – A Shared Future[22] and the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration[23] – were the subject of public consultations. In the Foreword to T: BUC the First Minister and deputy First Minister state: 'In developing this Strategy we have listened carefully to the wide range of detailed views provided in response to the earlier consultations on our approach to good relations.'[24]

11. The NIHRC recalls that the participation of rights holders is a core principle of human rights law and is recognised as a substantive right in many ratified treaties, including, inter alia, the CEDAW, Article 7, the CRC, Article 12, the FCNM, Article 15 and the UNCRPD, Article 19.

12. In the specific context of a post–conflict society and programmes aimed at peace building and reconciliation, the NIHRC notes that the experience accumulated by the UN highlights the importance of inclusivity. The UN Secretary General has stated that a:

> successful peacebuilding process must be transformative and create space for a wider set of actors — including, but not limited to, representatives of women, young people, victims and marginalized communities; community and religious leaders; civil society actors… to participate in public decision-making on all aspects of post-conflict governance and recovery.[25]

13. T:BUC contains public policy objectives which require the participation of rights holders to ensure their success. In 'recognition of the expertise and experience that resides within our community,'

[18] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/culture_report_final.pdf
[19] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/110720_NIHRC_Parades_and_Protests_in_NI_REPORT_cover_inners_Single_Col_V3_LOW.pdf
[20] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/104020_NIHRC_The_Display_of_Flags_Single_Column_V7_Final_Low_Res.pdf
[21] http://www.nihrc.org/uploads/publications/NIHRC_Transitional_Justice_Report.pdf
[22] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/asharedfuturepolicy2005.pdf
[23] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/reformatted_final_print_version_csi_-_26.07.10.pdf
[24] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p. 1.
[25] http://www.un.org/en/peacebuilding/pbso/pdf/SG%20report%20PB%202012.pdf

the OFMdFM has committed to ensuring that the mechanisms for implementing the strategy' will also enable the participation of practitioners and groups at a local level.'[26]

14. The NIHRC recalls the ICCPR, Article 25, that

> Every citizen shall have the right and the opportunity, without any of the distinctions mentioned in article 2 and without unreasonable restrictions: (a) To take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives

15. The NIHRC therefore welcomes the Committee's inquiry as a mechanism to assist in the fulfilment of the positive obligation to enable the participation of rights holders in a dialogue surrounding T: BUC.

16. **The NIHRC advises that the Committee examine the mechanisms put in place by the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities to ensure the effective participation of rights holders in the processes of implementing T: BUC.**

Human rights as an 'underpinning principle'

17. The NIHRC notes that T: BUC outlines a vision of 'a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.'[27]

18. 'Rights'[28] are identified as one of eleven 'principles' that will underpin the implementation of the Strategy and drive forward actions.

19. The OFMdFM is the lead department with responsibility for co-ordinating the application and monitoring of the NI Executive's compliance with human rights treaties. The NIHRC recognises the potential role of the Committee in scrutinising this aspect of devolved government.

20. **The NIHRC advises the Committee that the categorisation of human rights as a principle should not diminish their status as**

[26] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf para. 1.14
[27] ibid, p.3.
[28] Ibid, p.4.

binding legal obligations on the basis of which the NI Executive has corresponding duties. This issue should be addressed by the OFMdFM and the legality of human rights expressly acknowledged in any future legislation and implementation initiatives.

21. The NIHRC notes the limited references to human rights within T: BUC. The CRPD[29] is mentioned in cross referencing the NI Executive Strategy to improve the lives of disabled people – 2012 to 2015. Similarly, the CRC[30] is mentioned in cross referencing the NI Executive Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People 2006 – 2016.

22. Noting the T: BUC vision and, in particular, the commitment to 'equality of opportunity', the NIHRC recalls the ICCPR, Article 26, which states 'all persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law'. This is an autonomous human right that,

> prohibits discrimination in law or in fact in any field regulated and protected by public authorities [and] is therefore concerned with the obligations imposed on States parties in regard to their legislation and the application thereof.[31]

23. Noting the T: BUC vision, and the commitment to good relations and reconciliation, the NIHRC recalls the FCNM, Article 6, which requires the NI Executive to take,

> effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory.

24. The Advisory Committee on the FCNM has commented that regional strategies which focus on mutual accommodation rather than mutual respect and understanding would raise 'serious concerns'.[32] The Advisory Committee has stated that in Northern Ireland 'the concept of 'good relations' [has] apparently [developed] to substitute the concept of intercultural dialogue and integration of society.'[33]

[29] ibid, para. 1.33
[30] ibid, para. 2.31
[31] UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment 18: Non-discrimination, para 12.
[32] Advisory Committee on the FCNM, 'Third Opinion on the UK' (adopted 30 June 2011), para 125.
[33] Ibid., para 126.

25. The NIHRC notes that Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 gives partial domestic force to the duty contained in the FCNM, Article 6.

26. The framework established by international human rights law sets the standards which domestic laws, policies and actions must meet to ensure respect for the human rights of all individuals. **The NIHRC advises the Committee that T: BUC affords insufficient attention to the framework established by human rights law. Appropriate consideration of the relevant treaties and related soft law should therefore be evidenced by the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities responsible for the development and implementation of T: BUC.**

Sectarianism

27. The NIHRC notes that the Committee's inquiry will explore 'perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations.' It further notes that for the purposes of T: BUC 'sectarianism is defined as: threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour or attitudes towards a person by reason of that person's religious belief or political opinion; or to an individual as a member of such a group.'[34] In relation to the proposed draft legislation, the OFMdFM has committed to 'seek to find an appropriate consensus around a definition of sectarianism'.[35]

28. The NIHRC observes that the T: BUC working definition of sectarianism includes both 'attitudes' and 'behaviours'. The latter may be prohibited in domestic law and in some circumstances subject to criminal prosecutions, including heightened sentencing under the Criminal Justice (No.2) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 (the 2004 Order) for perpetrators of offences that have been aggravated by hostility.

29. T: BUC only recognises the fundamental relationship between sectarianism and criminal law legislation at one point by way of the Justice Act (NI) 2011. This is in specific regard to countering negative behaviours within a sporting context.[36]

30. The ICCPR, Article 20(2) states;

[34] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf para. 1.36
[35] ibid.
[36] ibid, para 5.28 The 2011 Act whilst using the term sectarianism does not provide a definition.

> any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law.

31. The UN Human Rights Committee has confirmed that this requires domestic legislation, and that this form of restricting freedom of expression is compatible with Article 19.[37]

32. The ICERD requires that positive measures be taken to eliminate incitement to, or acts of, discrimination. Article 4 requires the NI Executive to;

> *(*a) declare an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, and also the provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;
>
> (b) declare illegal and prohibit organizations, and also organized and all other propaganda activities, which promote and incite racial discrimination, and shall recognize participation in such organizations or activities as an offence punishable by law;
>
> (c) not permit public authorities or public institutions, national or local, to promote or incite racial discrimination.

33. The Rabat Plan of Action (RPA) on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence followed a series of expert workshops organised by the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights. Implementation of the RPA is required under the UN Human Rights Council resolution 16/18 on 'Combatting intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatisation of, and discrimination, incitement to violence, and violence against persons based on religion or belief'.

34. The RPA recommends that the domestic legal framework on incitement should be guided by the ICCPR, Article 20, and that robust definitions of key terms should be included.[38]

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[37] UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment 11: Prohibition of propaganda for war and inciting national, racial or religious hatred* (1983) at paras 1-2; UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment 34: Freedom of Expression* (2011) CCPR/C/GC/34, at para 51

[38] Rabat Plan of Action (2012) Recommendation 2, page 4

35. The RPA also recognises that a legislative response is not the only answer to challenging hate speech, recommending complementary policy initiatives 'with a view to creating and strengthening a culture of peace, tolerance and mutual respect.'[39]

36. The NIHRC notes that there is no express prohibition similar to Article 4 of ICERD, within the ECHR. However, the ECt.HR has recognised when considering Article 10, freedom of expression, that;

> as a matter of principle it may be considered necessary in certain democratic societies to sanction or even prevent all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on intolerance (including religious intolerance), provided that any 'formalities', 'conditions', 'restrictions' or 'penalties' imposed are proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued.[40]

37. **The NIHRC advises the Committee that the working definition of sectarianism in T: BUC conflates 'attitudes', with actions such as 'threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour'. It does not make clear that such actions may be prohibited by domestic law and subject to criminal sanctions. The Committee should seek to have this confusion addressed, taking into consideration the NI Executive's duty to prohibit sectarianism in accordance with human rights standards.**

38. The NIHRC recalls that during its examination of the UK in 2008 the ICERD Committee recognised efforts to combat sectarianism in Northern Ireland, but indicated concern that the situation 'is kept entirely outside the framework of protections against discrimination provided by the Convention and the Durban Programme of Action.[41] The Committee invited the UK Government, including the NI Executive, to

> examine whether the legislative and policy framework for dealing with the situation in Northern Ireland could not benefit by being underpinned by the standards, duties and actions prescribed by the Convention and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.[42]

[39] Rabat Plan of Action (2012) at para 24
[40] *Gunduz v. Turkey* (2005) 41 EHRR 5, at para 40
[41] UN Doc ICERD/C/GBR/18-20, para 20. http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/ICERD/docs/ICERD.C.GBR.CO.18-20.pdf
[42] ibid

39. Similarly, the CoE Advisory Committee on the FCNM found, when considering the previous proposed Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration[43], that the approach

> to treat sectarianism as a distinct issue rather than as a form of racism problematic, as it allows sectarianism to fall outside the scope of accepted anti-discrimination and human rights protection standards.[44]

40. In its 2011 concluding observations on the UK the ICERD Committee recommended that the State party:

> examine whether the legislative and policy framework for dealing with the situation in Northern Ireland could not benefit by being underpinned by the standards, duties and actions prescribed by the Convention and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action on inter-sectionality between ethnic origin, religion and other forms of discrimination.

41. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) is a comprehensive framework for combating racial discrimination and related intolerances.[45] The DDPA was adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001.[46]

The Declaration recognises that;

> Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance occur on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin and that victims can suffer multiple of aggravated forms of discrimination based on other grounds.[47]

42. The NIHRC recalls that the ICERD does not provide a definition of racism. However, the CoE European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) has defined racism as follows:

> racism shall mean the belief that a ground such as race, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic

[43] http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/reformatted_final_print_version_csi_-_26.07.10.pdf
[44] Third Opinion on the United Kingdom adopted on 30 June 2011, para 126. http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/minorities/3_fcnmdocs/PDF_3rd_OP_UK_en.pdf
[45] United Nations, *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance*, 8 September 2001
[46] United Nations, *Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related Intolerance*, 8 September 2001
[47] Durban Declaration (2001) at para 2

> origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons.[48]

43. **The NIHRC advises the Committee that T: BUC does not sufficiently engage with the recommendations of the ICERD Committee, nor does it reflect appropriately the definition of racism provided by the ECRI. The Committee should seek an assurance from the OFMdFM that this deficiency will be addressed.**

44. **In addition, the NIHRC advises the Committee that any future legislation should ensure that a definition of sectarianism in domestic law is premised upon the ECRI definition of racism.**

Good relations

45. The NIHRC notes that the Committee's inquiry seeks 'views on what good relations means'.

46. There is no statutory definition of 'good relations' in NI law. However, the NIHRC is cognisant of the working definition published by the Equality Commission Northern Ireland (ECNI):

> the growth of relations and structures for Northern Ireland that acknowledge the religious, political and racial context of this society, and that seek to promote respect, equity and trust, and embrace diversity in all its forms.[49]

47. The UN General Assembly, through the adoption of the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations Resolution, has recognised that dialogue among rights holders enhances mutual understanding and respect and underpins the objective of promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms and enrichment of common understanding of human rights.[50]

48. Recalling the value of dialogue, the UN Human Rights Council adopted Resolution 6/37 on the Elimination of all forms of intolerance

[48] Council of Europe CRI(2003)8 ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 7 On National Legislation To Combat racism And Racial Discrimination Adopted On 13 December 2002.
[49] Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: A guide for Public Authorities, p. 86. http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf
[50] UN General Assembly, Global Agenda for Dialogue by the General Assembly, A/RES/56/6, 21 November 2001, Article 3

and of discrimination based on religion or belief.[51] The Resolution emphasises:

> that promoting tolerance and acceptance by the public of and its respect for diversity and combating all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion and belief are substantial elements in creating an environment conducive to the full enjoyment by all of the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, as enshrined in article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.[52]

49. The CoE Faro Declaration encourages:

> intercultural dialogue on the basis of universal human rights, as a means of promoting awareness, understanding, reconciliation, tolerance and respect for the other, of preventing conflicts and of ensuring an integrated and cohesive society.[53]

50. The UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace recognises peace as being:

> a positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation.[54]

51. Creating a culture of peace, therefore, requires:

> Adherence to the principles of freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.[51]

52. The CoE has also recognised the role of intercultural dialogue in strengthening democratic society, including in post conflict situations.[55]

53. The Advisory Committee on the FCNM, as noted previously, has stated that in Northern Ireland 'the concept of "good relations" [has]

[51] See also Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/54, Elimination of all forms of religious intolerance
[52] UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 6/37: Elimination of all forms of intolerance and of discrimination based on religion or belief, 14 December 2007, para 8
[53] Faro Declaration on the council of Europe's Strategy for Developing Intercultural Dialogue (2005) DGIV/DC-FARO
[54] UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace, preamble
[55] Council of Europe, 'White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue Living together as equals in dignity' (2008) p.17 (Paper adopted by the Committee of Ministers)

apparently [developed] to substitute the concept of intercultural dialogue and integration of society.'[56]

54. The NIHRC considers that T: BUC does not engage with the comments of the FCNM. **The NIHRC advises the Committee to therefore consider the relationship between the domestic concept of good relations and the framework of intercultural dialogue set out by the CoE and UN human rights treaty bodies. The Committee should recommend that the OFMdFM restate its position, acknowledging that T: BUC sits within this internationally accepted framework.**

55. **The NIHRC further advises the Committee, that the OFMdFM, other NI Executive departments and public authorities responsible for the implementation of T: BUC should develop policies and programmes for delivery that adopt the framework of intercultural dialogue and recognise its relation to the domestic concept of good relations.**

56. The NIHRC recalls that the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75(2) requires designated public authorities 'without prejudice' to their obligations under Section 75(1), to 'have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.'[57] Specifically, the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, requires local councils to ensure that 'various functions are carried out with due regard to the need the need to promote', inter alia, 'good relations between persons of different racial groups'.[58]

57. Human rights laws and standards impose a duty on the NI Executive and public authorities to refrain from violating the rights of individuals in the first instance. However, there is also a positive obligation to take measures to prevent private persons or entities from committing acts that impair the enjoyment of the human rights of others.[59] Such preventive measures are of both a legislative and operational nature.

58. The FCNM, Article 6 states

> The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all

[56] Advisory Committee on the FCNM, 'Third Opinion on the UK' (adopted 30 June 2011), para 125.
[57] Northern Ireland Act, 1998, Section 75.
[58] Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order, Section 67.
[59] ICCPR, Article 2.

> persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.

59. The ICERD, Article 7, requires the adoption of

> immediate and effective measures, particularly in the fields of teaching, education, culture and information, with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups.

60. The CRC, Article 29 confirms that education

> shall be directed to:(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin

61. The UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, Article 10, has similarly asked that governments educate the population at large by requiring that they:

> encourage and promote understanding of the importance of the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions, inter alia, through educational and greater public awareness programmes.

62. The NIHRC notes that the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75 (2) broadly corresponds with the relevant human rights laws and standards. However, **the NIHRC advises the Committee that the wording of the legal requirement to 'have regard to the desirability' to promote good relations is not fully in accordance with the obligation to take 'immediate and effective measures'.**

63. **The NIHRC further advises the Committee to recommend that domestic legislation be amended and strengthened to comply with human rights laws and standards. As a minimum, all public authorities should be required to take 'immediate and effective measures' to promote good relations.**

64. The scope of the domestic good relations duty in Northern Ireland is restricted to three protected characteristics: 'religious belief, political opinion or racial group'. Elsewhere in the UK, however, the Equality Act 2010, Section 149(1) requires public authorities to 'foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected

characteristic and persons who do not share it'[60] This is a broader scope of application than Section 75 and encompasses eight protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.[61]

65. With respect to gender under the CEDAW, Article 5, the NI Executive must take steps to modify:

> the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women

66. Furthermore, the CEDAW Committee has recognised the link between gender-based violence and 'traditional attitudes by which women are regarded as subordinate to men or as having stereotyped roles.[62]

67. The UNCRPD, Article 8, requires the adoption of:

> immediate, effective and appropriate measures: (a) to raise awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities; (b) to combat stereotypes, prejudices… relating to persons with disabilities, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life

68. The Yogyakarta Principles, referring to gender reassignment and sexual orientation, recommend taking all appropriate measures to eliminate stereotypes and prejudices regarding sexual orientation and gender identity that impact on the ability to enjoy both civil and political[63] and socio-economic rights.[64]

> The ICERD, Article 7, requires the promotion of understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations and racial or ethnical groups.

69. The NIHRC notes the good relations duty in England and Wales and the scope of application required by the Equality Act 2010, ection 149(1), in addition to the positive obligations required by human rights

[60] The Equality Act 2010, Section 149.
[61] Ibid, Section 149(7)
[62] General Recommendation No. 19 (11th session, 1992) Violence against women
[63] Principle 5
[64] Principle 17

laws and standards. **The NIHRC advises that the Committee recommend broadening the scope of application required by Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.**

70. **The NIHRC further advises the Committee to recommend that the domestic duty to promote good relations be extended to six additional protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; sex; and sexual orientation.**

Equality and Good Relations Commission

71. The NIHRC notes that the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' (ICESCR Committee), General Comment 20, states that 'national legislation … should provide for mechanisms and institutions that effectively address the individual and structural nature of the harm caused by discrimination in the field of economic, social and cultural rights' and that 'domestic legal guarantees of equality and non-discrimination should be interpreted by these institutions in ways which facilitate and promote the full protection of economic, social and cultural rights'.[65]

72. The NIHRC further notes that the ECRI General Policy Recommendation 7 advises that public authorities should be obliged to promote equality and prevent discrimination when carrying out their functions.[66] The Explanatory Memorandum states that the promotion of equality could be achieved by placing public authorities, under the obligation to create and implement 'equality programmes' … The domestic law should provide for the regular assessment of the equality programmes, the monitoring of their effects, as well as for effective implementation mechanisms and the possibility for legal enforcement of these programmes, notably through the national specialised body.[67]

73. International human rights laws and standards do not require the establishment of an institution with responsibility for the promotion of good relations or intercultural dialogue and integration. However, they do for the purposes of monitoring and the legal enforcement of equality and non-discrimination laws. The NIHRC recognises the established domestic equality authority in Northern Ireland, the ECNI

[65] ICESCR Committee, General Comment 20: Non-discrimination in economic, social and cultural rights, para 40.
[66] ECRI General Policy Recommendation 7, para 8.
[67] An example of an equality programme is the nomination of a contact person for dealing with issues of racial discrimination and harassment or the organisation of staff training courses on discrimination. See ECRI General Policy Recommendation 7, Explanatory Memorandum, para 27. See further CoE ECRI General Policy Recommendation 2 on Specialised Bodies to Combat Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance at the National Level

and the Community Relations Council, both of which are sponsored by the OFMdFM.

74. **The Commission advises the Committee to assure itself that the proposed Equality and Good Relations Commission will be able to, and can, effectively carry out its functions. Any structural changes must be made with the express objective of increasing the protection and promotion of equality, non-discrimination, tolerance, mutual respect and understanding. There should be no retrogression from protections afforded by the existing structural arrangements of the ECNI and Community Relations Council.**

Northern Ireland Local Government Association

Together Building a United Community Inquiry
Local Government Briefing for OFMdFM Committee
Evidence Session 4th February 2015

INTRODUCTION

NILGA, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association, is the representative body for district councils in Northern Ireland. NILGA represents and promotes the interests of local authorities and is supported by all the main political parties. Good Relations is a key issue for local government due to the huge impact it can have on local communities, equality of opportunity and social well-being. NILGA is pleased to be able to have an opportunity to give evidence to the OFMdFM Committee, as part of their Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community and we trust that our comments will be taken into account within the final Committee Report. For further information regarding this response, please contact Karen Smyth, Head of Policy at NILGA on (028) 9079 8972 or at k.smyth@nilga.org

NILGA has compiled the following briefing to provide a summary of common council views in relation to the Inquiry Terms of Reference, and has also included views from the Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP), which is hosted by NILGA

GOOD RELATIONS

- **Theory, best practice, local and international practice**

Councils have been at the forefront of developing good practice at local level, and have been active in implementing local good relations strategies, focussing on tackling the key issues for their areas. A number of the councils have already written to the committee giving examples of this work and we can share detail on specific examples with Committee members on 4th February, should the Committee so wish. The Committee is also advised of the Quarterly and Annual reports provided to the Department in relation to good relations, giving a breakdown of activities.

Councils are keen to bring people together around shared agendas, on issues affecting society, such as poverty, employment, health issues, justice issues, culture and social development. A number of aspects of the new Local Government (NI) Act will assist in driving this approach (community planning and the partnership panel will be covered later in this briefing), but it is essential that there is a mainstreaming of good relations right across government and the sectors controlled by government, to ensure it is a key consideration when developing and implementing policy and strategy. Local communities must also be enabled to contribute effectively towards policy and decision-making, and again this necessary activity will be complemented by the new community planning regime. Development, collation, dissemination and learning from good practice require adequate and timely resources. Otherwise good relations units and the projects they fund will be unable to fully realise long term visions and must confine plans to the shorter term outcomes.

- **Monitoring**

Monitoring and evaluation measures must be robust and based upon well-researched evidence. Councils are keen to demonstrate value for money and accountability, with demonstrable outcomes. To achieve this, clear strategic leadership is required, with operational planning and review. Monitoring will also need to be effective in taking the wider definition of community and cultural identity into account, to ensure that all aspects of good relations including racism, sectarianism and LGBT issues are fully considered. Monitoring data should be disaggregated against this wider understanding of community so that it is clear which parts of our community need more targeted support which will enable progress towards equality of opportunity

The Local Government (NI) Act will set a new performance improvement regime in place, and it will be essential to develop a clear understanding of how the new requirements placed on councils will tie into ongoing work, such as good relations. Over time it is hoped that the Assembly government will develop a more outcomes-focussed performance framework, which councils can link into at local level.

- **Recommendations**

1. What is essential, particularly in the current circumstances - during what is a time of unprecedented change for councils - is to ensure that there is a high degree of certainty and stability in relation to the funding mechanism for good relations. Huge resources are required for this work, particularly for projects in relation to physical infrastructure. A long term strategy and associated implementation is required, in place of the annual funding process currently in place, which frequently results in late letters of offer and a high degree of uncertainty.

An additional concern is the current financial situation, which is resulting in substantial cuts across all departments, with a cumulative impact on councils.

2. It is vital that an ongoing and long term commitment is made to continue to resource the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) to support the new councils in effecting real change at local level. Councils have pioneered programmes and agreements in relation to bonfires, interfaces, territory markings and building community confidence, but it is clear that the recommendations within the recent NISRA evaluation of the DCGRP should be adopted by OFMdFM and incorporated in to strategy, policy and implementation. The DCGRP is the best tool to deliver effective intervention programmes which meet local needs.

3. Tackling sectarianism and racism needs to be at the core of all public policy and programming. The TBUC Strategy highlights diversity and integration as underpinning principles, and cultural expression as a priority area, but beyond the first few pages, the document seems to lose its focus on diversity and the definition of community seems to be limited to the two 'traditional' communities in NI. Initiatives such as capital projects, educational programmes, community projects and civic events should seek to define how they will build better relationships between people from different political racial and religious backgrounds. This will require a strong cross-departmental commitment to a peace-building plan.

4. A long term strategy is required, with the appropriate resources and a comprehensive inter-agency approach. Leadership from central government is vital, including a long term commitment to addressing contentious issues. This should include regular opportunities for Council Good Relations Officers to meet together with OFMdFM officials.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

The Local Government (NI) Act 2014 has introduced a number of new opportunities for councils that will also provide opportunities to build on the existing Good Relations practice. Articles 66 – 78 of the Act set out the requirements for councils and their partners in relation to community planning; Article 66 in particular enshrines the need to improve social well-being, including promoting equality of opportunity, having regard to the desirability of promoting good relations.

This work is at an early stage. The 11 new councils have appointed staff to begin to gather evidence in preparation for their community plans, and these officers are meeting regularly to ensure that the developing experience is shared, with support from Community Places. The sector is currently waiting on confirmation of who the statutory partners are likely to be, and we are in the process of responding to a recently issued DOENI consultation in relation to the guidance for all participants in the community planning process. This draft guidance whole-heartedly incorporates Equality and Good Relations requirements throughout the proposed process, and it may be helpful for the Committee to consider this consultation as part of its current deliberations.

Councils are clear that there is need to mainstream Good Relations into Community Planning. To properly address the issues facing our society, including racism, sectarianism and other good relations issues, a united approach is needed – between council, government departments and agencies, voluntary and community sector partners and the business community. By using this new approach to rethink how significant policy areas and budgets intersect at central and local level, we can work together on the opportunities community planning presents for peace-building and reconciliation. A community plan that facilitates connectivity and mobility within and between neighbourhoods can succeed in connecting people across communities.

A particular opportunity exists within Community Planning, and also stemming from the proposed transfer of functions in relation to the relationship between councils, DSDNI and the NI Housing Executive. Community planning presents an opportunity to create more diverse and inclusive neighbourhoods, with the support of those living and working locally. While housing remains outside the remit of councils, the proposed strategies around shared housing, proposed in the TBUC document, could be well supported through the Community Planning process, and associated community engagement activity.

- **Community Engagement**

Community engagement will be a vital requirement of the Community Planning, and in some areas, has already commenced. Belfast City Council has carried out an online survey of residents, Mid Ulster Council has held a series of 'town hall' style meetings in different towns within the new area, and other engagement activities are underway in other areas.

The draft Community Planning Statutory Guidance makes clear that all sectors of the community must have the opportunity to participate from the early stages of the process and have their needs and views taken into account.

Community engagement will also be a vital part of the new development planning process, and councils will each be required to develop a Statement of Community Involvement at the very outset of the new development planning cycle.

- **Links between Community and Development Planning**

It is important to note that after 1st April 2015, councils will not only be responsible for leading the community planning process, but will also be responsible for creating a new suite of 11 development plans. Aside from the enhanced levels of community engagement that our citizens will experience, the new, much more dynamic, development plan system is linked through legislation to community planning. This link to the physical development of an area will be vitally important to ensuring visible change for local communities. This is an opportunity to 'design out' division, over time, as a long term aim – and it is an opportunity that should not be missed.

- **Partnership Panel**

Another new opportunity to work differently, introduced by the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 is the Political Partnership Panel, which held its first meeting on 2nd December 2014 and meets again on 3rd February. This Panel brings together local government representatives from each of the 11 (currently shadow) councils and NILGA, with NI Executive Ministers, to discuss critical issues affecting local government and to begin to plan a more joined-up approach to strategy, policy, funding and performance improvement. The Panel will provide a regional interface to consider how Community Planning is developing and take a strategic approach to dealing with cross-cutting issues, such as Good Relations.

CONCLUSION

To ensure Good Relations in Northern Ireland is effective, a number of key building blocks need to be in place. Some of these are in the gift of local government, such as effective community planning, development planning, local Good Relations strategies and implementation.

Some other building blocks are in the hands of the NI Executive and Government Departments, such as effective strategic leadership and commitment, cross-departmental working, and adequate, appropriate and timely funding

With the necessary strategic political leadership from the NI Executive and Assembly, regional central-local cross party working in the Political Partnership Panel, and joined up central-local working at council level through community planning, Northern Ireland will be well-placed to make significant strides towards building a united community, but in the short to medium term, a number of difficult conversations need to take place to overcome the 'wicked issues' experienced, particularly by communities at interfaces. This may require an additional legislative solution to ensure that delivery of interface intervention is expedited.

NILGA correspondence

Dear Mr Nesbitt

Thank you for the invitation and opportunity to address the Committee this afternoon. At the meeting Mr Lyttle requested detail on the local government membership of the Political Partnership Panel. My apologies for not having this information to hand at the meeting. The Panel is currently attended by the following:

Council	Member	Party
Antrim and Newtownabbey District Council	Councillor Mandy Girvan	DUP
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council	Alderman Arnold Hatch	UUP
Belfast City Council	Councillor Paula Bradshaw	Alliance
Causeway Coast and Glens District Council	Councillor Joan Baird	UUP
Derry and Strabane District Council	Councillor Elisha McCallion	SF
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council	Councillor Josephine Deehan	SDLP
Lisburn and Castlereagh District Council	Councillor Geraldine Rice	Alliance
Mid and East Antrim District Council	Councillor Gerardine Mulvenna	Alliance
Mid Ulster District Council	Councillor Tony Quinn	SDLP
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council	Councillor Stephen Burns	SF
North Down and Ards District Council	Councillor Eddie Thompson	DUP
NILGA	Councillor Sean McPeake	SF
NILGA	Councillor Evelyne Robinson	DUP
NILGA	Councillor Seamus Doyle	SDLP
NILGA	Councillor Mark Cosgrove	UUP
NILGA	Councillor Alan McDowell	Alliance

The NILGA Chief Executive, Mr Derek McCallan will be responding separately to Mr Spratt in relation to his query regarding lobbying meetings with OFMdFM ministers.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you require any further information.

Regards

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5th February 2015

Dear Kathy,

Following on from evidence provided by NILGA's Head of Policy, on 4th February 2015, to the OFMDFM Committee, in regard to community planning, I am responding to a specific matter raised by Committee member Mr Jimmy Spratt MLA, related to meetings with OFMDFM ministers and officials. I'm delighted to provide this information. Please convey same to all those requiring it, with thanks.

As Chief Executive of NILGA, I made a presentation to the OFMDFM Committee as far back as 16th May 2012, at the Balmoral Show. This presentation centred on the need, as expressed by the representative body of Councils, for a more integrated approach to tailoring / disseminating policies, information, and funding, from European institutions, including the Committee of the Regions, and the various Department Generals responsible for European Structural Funds.

Follow up from this – as requested by the Committee and the Committee Chair – in 2012 and 2013 included preparing proposals for development with OFMDFM officials, together with a request to put these (better governance, integration and investment) proposals to Junior Ministers, mindful that they are of course scrutinised by the OFMDFM Committee.

Additional follow up activity involved evidence (both written and oral) to other Committees of the NI Assembly, including DARD and DETI, during 2013 but additionally, again, to the OFMDFM Committee, since the Junior Ministers have, as part of their portfolio, a policy influence on Social Cohesion and Strategic Migration, linked to Together Building a United Community, and which NILGA has a contractual / delivery role in through OFMDFM and Home Office operational requirements.

On the wider matter of "sweating the asset" of the EU and Councils having a better means to influence future Programmes for Government than they did last time, NILGA prepared evidence, developed proposals and an overall campaign, centring on better integration of effort, the two tiers of government pooling resources in the development of priorities, the implementation, the spending, and the evaluation of spending, of EU Structural and relevant non Structural Funds. A Programme for ***Local*** Government was created in 2013, with a view to ensuring that Councils could be part of the design and delivery of the next Programme for Government (which we and the new Councils eagerly await being party to when it is realised in 2016).

Apart from scrutiny committees, as CEO of NILGA I had a development meeting in relation to these issues with a senior OFMDFM official, Mr D McMahon, on 27th March 2014, and I, along with NILGA elected members met Junior Minister Jennifer McCann on 1st July 2014 and Junior Minister Jonathan Bell on 28th August 2014.

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Follow up letters to both ministers were sent on 28th August and 11th November 2014. Further meetings with OFMDFM officials have taken place on 6th November 2014 (Mr H Johnston) and 7th January 2015 (Mr J Reynolds), although these have regrettably been about only the absence of funding and resources around specific issues. Political meetings and political leadership will be sought, and NILGA is undeterred, as it is used to operating amidst financial anorexia.

The key emphases in such proposals, and meetings, is that Local Government is not as yet fully part of, or sufficiently challenged to be part of, a practical and political integration of effort in regard to putting NI's priorities into Europe, getting appropriate resources out of Europe, and managing those resources in an output driven, rather than institutional, manner. Benchmark work with Wales and Scotland has been put forward.

To show the corporate determination of the representative body, NILGA has, subsequently, applied for and won the "European Entrepreneurial Region of the Year" Award for April 2015 to March 2016, for all of Northern Ireland, as sponsored and judged by entrepreneurs and politicians who are part of the Committee of the Regions in the EU, having got material assistance from Invest NI and the support from the three MEPs. The Award is based upon an application which suggested that enterprise starts and finishes within local economies, enabled by local and regional government, and that the EU's institutions, national government, economic strategies, and the Small Business Act, can and should be more entrepreneurial and small business friendly, less bureaucratic and less risk averse. NILGA has no budget to deliver this, but has secured some private sector support and is committed to raising money through crowd funding to make it happen. With proposals now with Junior Ministers and as offered to the OFMDFM Committee specific to this material issue, it had been hoped that by now some joined up investment would have been forthcoming. However, austerity and processes have combined to prevent this happening to date.

NILGA is corporately and fervently of the view that it should have a policy and governance link to OFMDFM, in regard to the emerging Programme for Government, that the above mentioned Programme for Local Government can positively influence the new PfG, and that Junior Ministers and the OFMDFM Committee should work with the Association and member Councils, certainly after April 2015, to have effective scrutiny, advocacy, management, and accounting for the billions of euros paid into and taken back out of, the EU. Such governance and policy interaction is commonplace in, for example, the Netherlands and Wales. In parallel, our Head of Policy is fully engaged in the Reform of Local Government work, including the community planning activity which she, and the local government representatives, spoke in detail about on 4th February 2015.

This is a detailed account not just of when meetings occurred, but why, and I trust that all those receiving it will consider it constructively and as being in the mutual best interests of regional and local government – as well, of course, as the public we jointly serve.

Finally, as requested by the Committee, I confirm that the information requested about membership of the Partnership Panel for Local Government has been sent already to Ms. Jardine.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Derek McCallan
Chief Executive

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5 February 2015

Dear Karen,

The Committee would like to thank you for the briefings by NILGA representatives on Good Relations and Community Planning at its meeting of 4 February 2015, which Members found very informative.

As discussed during the session on Community Planning, the Committee would welcome further information on the membership of the Political Partnership Panel. Members also requested details of lobbying of OFMDFM by your Chief Executive and information on any meetings that took place with Ministers, when the meetings were held and what they related to.

I would be grateful for a response by 19 February 2015.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

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Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership



Response to the Inquiry on *Together: Building a United Community*

Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership
September 2014

About NISMP

1.Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP) aims to work across the spheres of government in Northern Ireland and with other key stakeholders to ensure that Northern Ireland is a welcoming place for new migrants. It seeks to support the retention and integration of people in a way that helps meet skills and labour needs to support future economic growth. It provides a regional advisory, developmental and consultative function, enabling our partners and stakeholders to develop an appropriate Northern Ireland migration policy structure. This will ensure that Northern Ireland's needs and concerns in respect of immigration are recognised within the constraints of UK wide strategy. This paper will speak to issues directly impacting Northern Ireland in the wider context of UK immigration policy**.** It has been approved by representatives on the Partnership. However this does not necessarily reflect the views of Partner Organisations, some of whom have not been canvassed.

General Comments

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2. NISMP welcomes a community cohesion strategy for Northern Ireland in the form of Together: Building a United Community. In particular, we welcome the cross party, cross-departmental elements to the strategy, and the emphasis on local delivery on issues of good relations. The vision for the strategy is ambitious and comprehensive, and we welcome in particular the emphasis on diversity and the celebration of cultural expression without fear of hate and tolerance.

3. Unfortunately, while there are some references to diversity and racial equality in the document, it is still a strategy which is very much focused on the two 'traditional communities' in Northern Ireland. In spite of its vision, it feels at times like an exclusive document in practice. This is difficult for the strategy and its implementation, as well as its relationship to other strategies across government including Delivering Social Change and the Racial Equality Strategy. While these documents are in theory all linked together, even to the extent in some places that they are interdependent in terms of review and monitoring, there is little connectedness between them, and in some areas they are in direct contradiction.

4. This response will focus on the areas of work in which NISMP is directly involved – integration of migrant groups, and the incorporation of BME and migrant communities in the process of community planning at a local level. The response is divided into the following sections:

A. Consistency in the TBUC vision of a diverse society;
B. Relationship between TBUC and the Racial Equality Strategy;
C. Links between TBUC, local government, good relations, and community planning; and
D. Measurement, process and indicators.

A. Moving beyond "Two Communities": Making the strategy tie in with the vision of a diverse society

5. Northern Ireland has seen significant demographic changes in the past decade. In a region which had a BME population of less than 0.8% in 2011, ethnic minorities now make up 1.8% of Northern Ireland. Births to foreign born mothers have increased to 1 in 10, with that figure increasing to 1 in 5 in some parts of the region. Where previously people of Chinese ethnicity made up the largest number, now Polish and Lithuanian are the two most common first languages outside of English. Across Northern Ireland diversity is increasing, and has brought challenges as well as growth and opportunities. In its opening paragraph and stated vision, Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) acknowledges these changes in a summary of its vision:

6. A united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

7. The strategy highlights diversity and integration as underpinning principles, and cultural expression as a priority area. NISMP welcomes this approach to a dramatically changing society as it moves towards a more shared, safer and more cohesive community. However beyond the first few pages, the document appears to lose its focus on diversity and the definition of community seems to be limited to the two 'traditional communities' in NI.

8. As stated in our response to the good relations indicators review, NISMP would like to stress the importance of monitoring to take into account the wider definition of community and cultural identity so as not to limit good relations monitoring to relations between individuals identifying as Protestant or Catholic, British or Irish. While we recognise that the Racial Equality Strategy is a document focusing specifically on BME and migrant groups, we believe this is a separate but complementary issue to community relations/cohesion. The nature of community relations, community tensions and shared space is not limited to equality alone, and has much to do with recognition and acceptance of different identities. While certain elements of the document recognise this, it is not borne out in either the identified project priorities or review indicators. The Racial Equality Strategy does make reference to the full inclusion of BME groups in public life; however we believe it is essential for that to be reflected in the overall strategy for social cohesion in Northern Ireland – Together: Building a United Community. Additionally, the incorporation of other identities when looking at social cohesion and building a united community provides opportunities to have discussions about cultural, national, religious and ethnic identities in a more diverse, multi-faceted, and less threatening way than has previously been possible in the region given the historical tensions. The Building a United Community document does not go far enough in addressing these concerns, and as such it would be beneficial to be more clear about the diversity of the community, reflecting the rapidly changing demographics.

9. There are BME groups which have been in Northern Ireland since the 1960s – people living here who experienced the Troubles and lived with the consequences of community tensions – and who have done their part to work towards good relations. There is significant learning to be gleaned from some of these community groups and the models they have employed. Artsekta is an example of this – taking cultural events as a means to feature BME

and migrant community culture, while simultaneously featuring 'local' art and culture. By using this format to showcase Irish and Highland alongside traditional Polish cultural expression for example, cultural practice from 'traditional communities' reaches audiences it might not have reached otherwise. It is examples like this which are missing from the document and which we would advocate for the incorporation into future planning around social cohesion. Cultural events are often taken as an end themselves. With this approach the opportunities and learning which could be achieved out of them are lost. Looking at the programmes funded by delivering social change, it is not clear how groups which use diverse communities to explore social issues – for example the model created by the Belfast Friendship Club, Challenge for Change in Newry and Mourne as well as the examples of world cafe events and employability training in the Belfast Integration and Participation Project - would be prioritised in accessing funds through Delivering Social Change. With the restructuring of the minority ethnic fund there have been significant difficulties in the maintenance of some projects which have consistently demonstrated positive results in creating community cohesion and integration. The Social Investment Fund would be well invested in some of these community projects, but without direction and prioritisation from TBUC, it is difficult to see how that would happen. This is one example of an issue raised in the NISMP response to the Good Relations Indicators review – where the measurement may fail to capture the positive outcomes, resulting in these projects being undervalued with regard to their contribution to social cohesion.

10. Additionally, while the migrant and BME groups in NI are normally entitled to access many of the programmes outlined in TBUC, there should be some acknowledgement about some of the practical and cultural barriers which may inhibit them from doing so. There are areas where it could be beneficial to make a targeted approach to some of the more marginalised communities, and ensure they have an awareness of and access to the programmes on offer through Delivering Social Change and TBUC. Taking a targeted approach in some areas is consistent with both positive duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, as well as the acknowledgement of the need for proactive work outlined in the Racial Equality Strategy consultation document.

Key Recommendations:|

1. ***In the development of programmes to tackle sectarianism, there are opportunities to examine issues of exclusion and discrimination across the board. While there is reference to some Section 75 groups in the executive summary of TBUC, the reference to social discord and discrimination outside of sectarianism is barely referenced. In order to elicit real social change for all members of the community of Northern Ireland, it is important that the entire document reflect the commitment to diversity outlined in the vision of the strategy. Without strong leadership at a policy level, it is difficult for the vision of integration across community groups to trickle down as the programmes will glean their objectives from the strategy which supports them.***
2. ***There should be some targeted approaches to the programmes delivered under TBUC, such as the United Youth programme, aimed at young people from migrant communities. This is an opportunity to promote integration, improve equality of opportunity, and demonstrate a commitment to diversity.***

B. Connections between the Racial Equality Strategy and Together: Building a United Community

11. As stated in the previous section, there is incongruence between the message of the importance of diversity laid out in the introduction to TBUC and the rest of the document which seems quite restricted to being a 'two community' one. This chasm is also evident in the diversion between the protection of cultural expression in TBUC, and the hesitance to commit to the right to cultural expression as one of the six shared aims of the Racial Equality Strategy. While TBUC holds cultural expression up as a key tenet which is to be protected, the Racial Equality Strategy identifies cultural expression as a potential barrier to integration, even referencing the practice of female genital mutilation as a risk factor. This is extremely contradictory and damaging to the relationship between the two strategies. More importantly, there is a risk that a message is sent that the only cultures and diversity which are to be protected are the two majority communities in Northern Ireland.

12. During informal focus studies with members of the Belfast Friendship Club, anecdotes of attempts to work with neighbours and communities were met by several migrants with further and escalated harassment – and these were the stories of people with proficiency in English, and the support of strong networks they had built through the BFC and other migrant communities. The dramatic increase in racially motivated attacks in the past year demonstrates the centrality of race, ethnicity and migration to issues of social cohesion. The First Minister himself pointed out after tensions arose when one migrant was offered a house in East Belfast, that there are tensions within neighbourhoods about 'locals' which led to the attacks, rather than it being associated with the tenant's race. This shows the interconnectedness of issues of social housing, deprivation, resource constricted environments, and social cohesion. While this is acknowledged in the TBUC document, it is less so in the Racial Equality Strategy. The acknowledged link between sectarianism and racism is also important to consider in the joining up of these two strategies.

Key Recommendations

1. ***More should be done to ensure the interconnectedness between the Racial Equality Strategy and Together: Building a United Community. This should include improved representativeness of the Racial Equality Panel in Delivering Social Change and monitoring mechanisms of TBUC.***
2. ***Action should be directed from TBUC to ensure that the Racial Equality Strategy does not contradict the key priorities of TBUC, in particular the priority of cultural expression. By failing to acknowledge cultural expression as a priority in the RES, but making it a key priority in TBUC, it both confuses and lends the impression that the cultural expression of the traditional communities in Northern Ireland are the only ones protected.***
3. ***At the time of writing this strategy, racist attacks were on a downward trend. Since 2013, the number of racist attacks has increased by more than 100% in spite of immigration figures levelling out. It is important that any review of TBUC takes these changes into consideration, and incorporates anti-racism strategies across its initiatives with sufficient investment and resource.***

C. Links between local government, good relations and community planning

13. Many of the recent attacks against migrants and BME groups have been justified by saying they are not racially motivated, but rather motivated by keeping local areas local. This mentality is reinforced by the segregation within neighbourhoods and is an excellent example of the overlap between racism and sectarianism, and the need to look closely at working with communities to identify solutions to local issues which help people feel less threatened by diversifying communities. This is an issue which has been recognised by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and there is a lot of positive learning from the racial equality, good relations and migrant support work undertaken by NIHE.

14. There is a considerable body of anecdotal, academic and commissioned research which indicates the best practice of integration and social cohesion happening at a local level. NISMP welcomes the acknowledgement of this in the Building a United Community document, as well as the commitment to implementation of community relations strategies through the District Councils Good Relations Programme. Community planning provides a key opportunity through which the creation of more diverse and inclusive neighbourhoods might take place with the support of those individuals living and working locally. While housing remains outside of the remit of councils, the proposed strategies around shared housing proposed in TBUC would be well supported through direct working with the community planning process. This would provide the opportunity to incorporate shared learning from the Housing Executive, residents' associations, and local community groups into the implementation of the key commitments in TBUC such as shared housing and the removal of 'peace walls'.

Key Recommendations

1. ***As the process of community planning develops, Delivering Social Change and the commitments of TBUC should be channelled through these mechanisms. This should include resource and capacity building for individuals from BME and migrant backgrounds.***
2. ***There should be more coordinated actions using existing partnerships and joint working to roll out examples of best practice on a regional basis and support councils with less experience working with diverse populations.***
3. ***In considering the commitment to work with community groups and neighbourhoods to reduce 'chill factors' which lead to exclusion and intimidation in communities, it is important that the impact of this interpretation of localism has on BME and migrant groups. Without considering the needs of these groups in the development of shared and cohesive housing, tensions are likely to continue and racist attacks may continue to increase.***

D. Measurement, process and indicators

15. NISMP submitted a response to the review of good relations indicators. We would like to take the opportunity to reinforce the comments put forward in that document here. We acknowledge the statement within the consultation document that good relations indicators relating to the forthcoming Racial Equality Strategy have been developed separately. While we welcome this, we believe that in the context of our changing demographics, consideration to the full interpretation of good relations duties should be given to each good relations indicator within this current review. It is therefore important that there are clear links between the aims and commitments outlined in the strategy and the indicators which are being used to monitor these. While we support the focus on outcome indicators, it is stated in the consultation document that the revised indicators will be used to monitor progress within TBUC at every level of implementation. We would therefore recommend that in order that these indicators may be used to both monitor implementation as well as to assess the contribution of TBUC activities in meeting the stated outcomes, a further set of input indicators is required. We would recommend that within each of the proposed indicators, data is disaggregated according to the ethnic background of respondents in order to more robustly assess the differential impact of interventions on various communities and thus better inform future related planning.

DRAFT

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NISMP Community Profiles extract

NISMP

NORTHERN IRELAND STRATEGIC MIGRATION PARTNERSHIP



Community profiles for Local Government Districts



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Foreword



Councils are embarking on a new era of enhanced powers, enabling effective local responses to meet local needs and aspirations. This ability to shape areas in ways which draw on the skills and experiences of communities is an opportunity which councils welcome and about which we are excited.

Reform in local government coincides with demographic changes resulting from inward migration. These changes have contributed new energy and talents to local areas, have helped sustain local businesses and driven demand for locally based services. While this is obviously a positive outcome, we must equally acknowledge the challenges it can bring, such as additional pressures on some services and potential issues with community safety and cohesion.

It is imperative therefore that the processes coordinated by local government, most notably community planning, the promotion of good relations and the local development plan, are informed by relevant data and statistics on population stocks and trends. The NISMP Community Profiles for Local Government support councils and other agencies to engage with, plan for and deliver to communities more effectively and efficiently. In turn this will enable us to maximise the potential that is inherent within our communities.

Alderman Geraldine Rice

Chair, NISMP



Minority Ethnic Demographics: Community Profiles for Local Government Districts

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Introduction

Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

The Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership (NISMP) is a cross-party partnership which works across the spheres of government and between the public, private and third sectors to ensure that Northern Ireland effectively welcomes, supports and integrates new migrants in a way which contributes to future economic growth and vibrant, cohesive communities.

The Partnership provides a regional advisory, developmental and consultative function, which enables our partners and stakeholders to cultivate an appropriate Northern Ireland migration policy structure and works to ensure that Northern Ireland's needs and concerns in respect of immigration are recognised within the parameters of related UK wide policy.

Community Profiles

What are the NISMP Community Profiles? What information do they provide? How are they useful in the context of local government?

The NISMP Migrant Community Profiles Pack for Councils 2015 will support Councils, councillors and staff to better understand the ethnic diversity within new local government district boundaries and to better engage with migrant and minority ethnic communities.

There are 12 profiles in total: one for each of the 11 councils and one for the whole of Northern Ireland. Each one maps the size and diversity of migrant and minority ethnic communities represented within its constituency boundaries. Using figures collated principally from NISRA (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency) data sets, the profiles give an indication of migration flows into and out of the area over time. This includes nationalities represented, the level of economic activity of migrant and minority ethnic communities, their needs in relation to public services and housing as well as levels of racist hate crime offences.

The profiles are intended to support councils in promoting equality of opportunity and good relations in the execution of council duties. The detail they provide will assist councils in meeting these obligations in the development and implementation of the community plan, local development plans, community safety and good relations.

NB

All NISRA data sets are currently being configured against the 11 new council boundaries. Where available these data sets were used in the compilation of the NISMP Community Profiles. Where this data is not yet available, the NISRA technical guidance on production of official statistics for the 11 new local government districts has been used.

It is important to note that many nationals from A2 countries (Bulgaria and Romania) are not included in a number of these data sets as, until January 2014, transitional restrictions limited their access to the labour market with related limitations on access to health care and housing.

Migrant Demographics

How has migration contributed to population change in Northern Ireland over the last decade?

Improved political and social stability, increasing investor confidence and, most significantly, expansion of the European Union have resulted in a sharp increase in inward migration into Northern Ireland and a hitherto unknown diversity of nationalities and cultures represented within the general population. At its peak, between mid-2006 and mid-2007, estimates put the number of people coming to live in Northern Ireland from outside the United Kingdom at 19,400, while 11,300 left to live outside the UK. The overall effect in this year was of population growth of 8,000 due to international migrants[1].

In recent years however, the flow of inward migration has slowed considerably, reversing in mid-2010 to mid-2011 to a net outflow of approximately 700 people who left to live outside the UK[2]. The most recent data available shows that in mid-2011 to mid-2012 12,900 people came to live in Northern Ireland from outside the United Kingdom while 12,500 migrants left for destinations outside the UK, representing a net inflow of 400 international migrants for this period.

While migration flows have slowed considerably in recent years, many migrants have chosen to settle in Northern Ireland for the longer term, resulting in lasting changes to regional and local demographics. This is clearly illustrated by the 2011 census data and similar data sets which reveal the extent of the demographic and social change in the decade since the previous census:

- The number of Northern Ireland residents who were born outside either the UK or the Republic of Ireland has increased from 27,200 at the time of the 2001 census to 81,000 in 2011 (a rise of 53,800 people), representing 1.6% and 4.5% of the overall population respectively.
- 50,400 people over the age of three have a language other than English or Irish as their main language. Polish is, by a considerable margin, the most widely spoken language in Northern Ireland after English, with 17,700 people speaking it as their first language.
- In the year ending March 2014 there were 87,684 requests for interpreters made to the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts. This is a vast increase from the 1,850 requests that were made in 2005-06 when this data was first collected.
- 10% of babies born in Northern Ireland in 2012 were born to mothers who themselves were born outside the United Kingdom or Ireland. In 2001 this figure was 3%.

Overview of Findings

What is the size of the migrant population in Northern Ireland? How diverse is it? How does this differ across the region?

Each council profile builds a picture of the migrant communities represented in the council area. While this picture may have changed in the detail since the capture of the data used to compile the profiles, broad trends in migration patterns and nationalities represented within the area can be identified and used to support effective policy

1 NISRA, 2008, 'Long-term International migration estimates for Northern Ireland (2006-7)'
2 NISRA, August 2013, 'Long-term international migration estimates for Northern Ireland'.

making and service provision. The information within these profiles can be updated or supplemented through NISRA.

The main findings from the profiles are as follows:

Population Size and Diversity

- 4.5% of the population in NI was born outside the UK or RoI according to census data. At 6.4% Mid Ulster LGD has the highest percentage of residents born outside UK or RoI and Causeway Coast & Glens has the lowest at 2.8%.
- Of those who don't speak English or Irish as their main language, 26.5% cannot speak English or cannot speak it well. In Mid Ulster this rises to 33% while in Belfast the figure is lowest at 18%
- The three main languages spoken in Northern Ireland other than English or Irish are: Polish (spoken by 35% of those who have a main language other than English or Irish), Lithuanian (12%), and Portuguese (4.5%)
- The main reasons that people migrated to NI in 2013 were: Work (46%), Family (29%), Education (11%), Other (6%), Unknown (4%), Asylum seeker (3%)
- 10 % of births in NI were to foreign born mothers in 2012. Mid Ulster and Belfast recorded the highest rates at 15% and 14% respectively and Derry & Strabane and Causeway Coast & Glens the lowest at 5% and 6% respectively.

Economic Activity

- 7,800 National Insurance numbers (NINo) were issued to non-UK nationals resident in NI in 2012. 32% of these were issued in Belfast, 13% in Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon and 13% in Mid Ulster. At 3% North Down & Ards issued the lowest number of NINos to non-UK nationals and Antrim & Newtownabbey and Causeway Coast & Glens had the second lowest at 4% each.
- In Northern Ireland the most economically active residents aged between 16 and 74 according to language spoken are:

  Malayalam (92%); Slovak (90%), Tagalog/Filipino (90%); Lithuanian (87%); Polish (84%); Latvian (85%); Hungarian (84%), Russian (82%); Portuguese (77.5%); English (66%); Irish (66%); Chinese (56%)

Public Services and Housing

- The number of requests to NI Health and Social Care Interpreting Service increased by 311% in between the years ending March 2007 and March 2014. The increases experienced in each of the Health and Social Care Trusts for this period are:

  Belfast Trust: (590%); Northern Trust: (184%); South Eastern Trust: (532%); Southern Trust: (262%); Western Trust: (299%);
- There has been a 66% increase in newcomer pupils in NI since 2007. The highest increase was registered in Mid & East Antrim (119%) and the lowest in North Down & Ards (39%)
- Craigavon, Belfast, Dungannon and Newry are the NIHE districts which receive the most requests for social housing and homeless applications from migrant workers. Banbridge, Moyle, Larne and Strabane have least.

Community safety

In 2013 the councils which recorded the most offences with a racist motivation were Belfast (356), Derry & Strabane (56) and Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon (54). Those with the least recorded offences were Causeway Coast & Glens (16), Fermanagh & Omagh (19) and North Down & Ards (19).

It is important to note, however, that there is a widely recognised underreporting of hate crimes throughout Northern Ireland.

Community Engagement

What responsibilities do councils have towards these new communities?

How can councils engage with migrant communities?

New council boundaries will require councillors and council officers to represent and work on behalf of a larger number of residents and households over an expanded geographical area. Community engagement within these new boundaries will require in the first instance a demographic analysis of the area in order to identify the range and sizes of communities, existing community representation and gaps in representation. The NISMP Community Profiles serve as a springboard for undertaking this analysis with respect to migrant communities.

Challenges of community engagement for councils

Local Government Reform will fundamentally alter the relationship between central and local government, creating an enhanced role for councils in the planning and delivery of local economic development, urban regeneration and public services within their area. The reform of council structures and the delivery of government functions are aimed at making the public sector more responsive to the needs of local communities and accountable to the electorate.

Councils are at the heart of this process, with an expanded remit granting them power over local economic and community development and the ability to shape the delivery of public services through the community planning function. In the execution of these duties councils are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity across the nine Section 75 grounds and the promotion of good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. It is therefore incumbent on councils that they seek not only to address key inequalities in relation to outcomes but also that all processes which require community input are accessible to all. Councils must therefore ensure that community participation is actively facilitated with particular regard given to communities considered hard to reach through traditional models of engagement.

Councils are therefore challenged not only in identifying the minority ethnic communities within their expanded boundaries, but also in developing appropriate models of engagement with these communities.

NISMP can further support councils in demographic analysis, engagement and support of migrant communities by:

- **Contributing to the understanding of future local government and wider public service needs through development of demographic forecasting models.**
- **Identifying how migrant communities contribute to the local economy and forecasting future migration needs for the council in relation to economic growth.**
- **Working with councils and community organisations to develop a toolkit for engagement with BME and migrant communities.**
- **Monitoring migration patterns into and out of the council area, patterns of civic participation and resource demand.**
- **Facilitating network development, information exchange and dissemination of good practice**
- **Supporting the implementation of the Racial Equality Strategy through acting as a conduit for regional and local government discussions on local action and monitoring mechanisms.**

Northern Ireland

A. Migrant and minority ethnic communities: population size and diversity

The 2011 Census provides important information on the population of Northern Ireland. Compiled from Census data, Table 1 shows the place of birth for people resident in Northern Ireland.

Of the 1,810,863 people resident in Northern Ireland, 80,621 were born outside the UK or Ireland. This represents 4.5% of the population.[3]

Table 1: Place of birth of residents in Northern Ireland	
Place of Birth	**No. of Residents**
Northern Ireland	1,608,853
United Kingdom (Other) + Channel Islands, Isle of Man	83,517
Republic of Ireland	37,872
Europe (outside UK and RoI)	47,207w
Africa	5,581
Middle East	1,071
Asia	16,222
North America and Caribbean	6,999
Central and South America	1,069
Oceania and Antarctica	2,468
Other	4
All Usual Residents	**1,810,863**

Table 2 shows the range of languages currently spoken as a main language within Northern Ireland[4]. **50,376 residents aged 3+ speak a language other than English or Irish as their main language. Of those whose main language is not English or Irish, 26.5% cannot speak English, or cannot speak it well[5].**

Table 2: Languages spoken within Northern Ireland			
First Language	**No. of residents aged 3+**	**First Language**	**No. of residents aged 3+**
English	1,681,171	Chinese	2,214
Polish	17,731	Tagalog/Filipino	1,895
Lithuanian	6,250	Latvian	1,273
Irish (Gaelic)	4,164	Russian	1,191
Portuguese	2,293	Malayalam	1,174
Slovak	2,257	Hungarian	1,008
		Other	13,090

3 www.nisra.gov.uk/Census/2011Census.html
4 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk: Census 2011>Main Language
5 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk: Census 2011>Main Language

B. Measuring migrant population stocks and flows within Northern Ireland

It is difficult to accurately measure migrant population flows in Northern Ireland mainly due to the freedom of movement accorded to EU citizens. The disparity in time periods covered by the various data sources used to approximate migration trends presents further complications in accurately calculating migration stocks and flows. Nevertheless these data sources can enable an approximation of trends related to migration.

Data sources most frequently used to compile estimates of migrant stocks and flows are:

1. Health card registrations from non-UK nationals;
2. Number of births to foreign-born mothers; and
3. National insurance number allocations to non-UK nationals.

B1. Health card registrations from non-UK nationals

The most recent trend in inward migration peaked in 2007. During this year 19,369 health card registrations from non-UK nationals were made in Northern Ireland, against 6,888 deregistrations (a net increase of 12,481 registrations). In 2013, the most recent year where complete data is available at the time of writing, the corresponding figures are 10,801 new registrations and 6,226 deregistrations (a net increase of 4,575 registrations)[6,7].

2013 data is available with regard to health card registrations against country of birth and reasons given for coming to the UK.

In 2013 the top three countries of birth for non UK-born health card registrations for Northern Ireland were[8]: Poland, Lithuania, Republic of Ireland.

In 2013 the top three reasons given for coming to the UK for Northern Ireland were[9]: Work (46%), Family (29%), Education (11%).

B2. Number of births to foreign born mothers

The proportion of children born in Northern Ireland whose mother was born outside the UK or Ireland has risen more than three fold over the last ten years. In 2001, 700 out of 22,000 births in Northern Ireland (3%) were to foreign-born mothers. This has risen to 2,459 out of 25,269 in 2012 (10%)[10].

B3. National Insurance Number allocations to non-UK residents

National Insurance Numbers (NINo) can be used to gauge the number of migrant workers within a local government district. Using data sourced from the Department for Work and Pensions and compiled by NISRA, Table 3 and Figure 1 below show the numbers of NINo allocations to non-UK nationals in Northern Ireland between 2002 and 2012[11].

6 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk (Home > Health and Social Care > Health Card Registrations from Abroad (administrative geographies)
7 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk (Home > Health and Social Care > Health Card Deregistrations from Abroad (administrative geographies)
8 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk (Home > Health and Social Care > Health Card Registrations from Abroad by Country of Birth, LGD2014
9 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk (Home > Health and Social Care > Health Card Registrations from Abroad: Reason to UK, LGD2014
10 www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/demography/publications/births_deaths/births_2012.pdf p. 7 *(provisional figures)*
11 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk (Population> Migration > National Insurance No. Allocations to non-UK Residents)

Fig 1: NINo Allocations to Non-UK Nationals resident within Northern Ireland

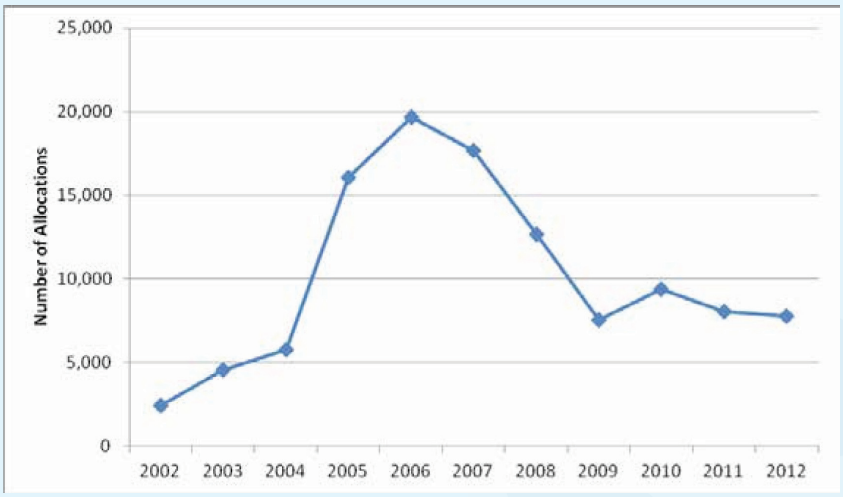


Table 3: NINo Allocations to Non-UK Nationals											
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Northern Ireland	2,450	4,570	5,760	16,060	19,690	17,650	12,640	7,530	9,400	8,030	7,800

C. Public Services and Housing

C1. Health

The Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Interpreting Service (NIHSCIS) provides a regional interpreting service for all Health and Social Care organisations.

From April 2006 to March 2014, the number of requests to NIHSCIS for interpreter services increased by 312% (see Table 4).

The most requested languages across Northern Ireland in year ending March 2014 were Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Chinese (Mandarin) and Slovak[12].

Table 4: Requests for interpreter services made to NIHSCIS	
Year	No. of requests
April 2006- March 2007	21,283
April 2007- March 2008	31,284
April 2008- March 2009	35,103
April 2009- March 2010	42,516
April 2010- March 2011	51,734
April 2011- March 2012	63,868
April 2012 – March 2013	75,649
April 2013 – March 2014	87,684

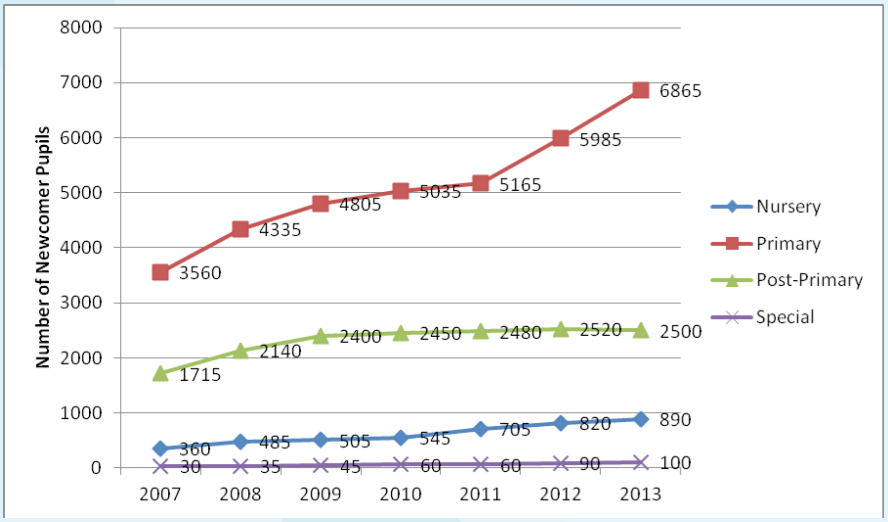
12 Figures provided by NIHSCIS, Belfast HSCT

C2. Education

The term 'newcomer' pupil is defined by the Department of Education as referring to a pupil who has enrolled in a school but who does not have satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum and does not have a language in common with the teacher.

Figure 2 shows the combined numbers of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland enrolled in nursery, primary and post-primary schools. **Between 2007 and 2013 there has been an 82% increase in the number of newcomer pupils[13].**

Figure 2: Number of Newcomer Pupils in Northern Ireland



C3. Housing

From 1st August 2011 to 31st July 2012, **NIHE District Offices** received 1,885 social housing applications and 760 homeless applications from migrant workers, and made social housing allocations to 275 migrant worker applicants. On 31st July 2012 they had 910 migrant worker tenants (all figures have been rounded to the nearest 5)[14].

13 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk Home>Children Education and Skills > Newcomers
14 Figures provided by NIHE

D. Economic Activity

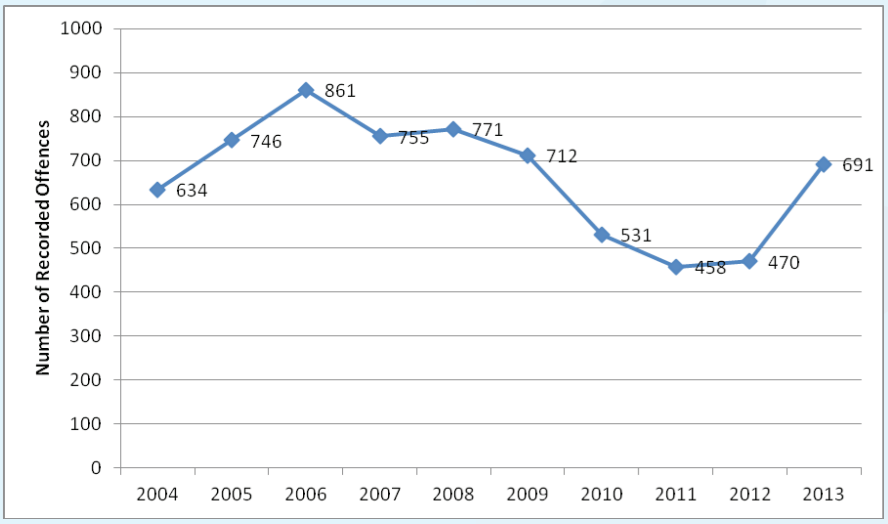
Table 5 shows the percentage of economically active residents aged between 16 and 74 according to their main language spoken [15]. Economically inactive residents will fall within one of the following categories: Retired; Student; Looking after home/family; Long-term sick/disabled; and Other.

Table 5: Economic activity by main language spoken in Northern Ireland							
	Percentage of economically active usual residents aged 16 to 74 against language spoken						
	English	Polish	Lithuanian	Irish	Portuguese	Slovak	Chinese
Northern Ireland	66%	86%	87%	66%	77.5%	90%	56.5%
	Percentage of economically active usual residents aged 16 to 74 against language spoken						
	Tagalog/ Filipino	Latvian	Russian	Malayalam	Hungarian	Other	
Northern Ireland	90%	85%	82%	92%	84%	72%	

E. Community Safety

The total number of offences recorded with a racist motivation within Northern Ireland from 2004 to 2013 is presented in Figure 3 below[16]. There is recognition in the NI Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland that many hate crimes and hate incidents go unreported.

Figure 3: Number of recorded offences with a racist motivation in Northern Ireland



15 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk Census 2011 > Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion > Economic Activity by Main Language

16 www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk Home > Crime and Justice > Hate Crime Offences

Northern Ireland Women's European Platform

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister Inquiry into Building a United Community

The purpose of the inquiry is to inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance; and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making. The Inquiry will also seek to make recommendations based on the evidence gathered.

This response by Northern Ireland Women's European Platform to the OFMDFM Committee is aimed to:

- Demonstrate the lack of commitment and actions in the peace process to address gender inequalities including the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) strategy
- Promote the need for women in delivering peace in Northern Ireland
- Make recommendations to the Committee on how women can be contributors and implementers of the peace process

About Northern Ireland Women's European Platform

- Provides women in Northern Ireland with a platform to make their voices heard on domestic, European and international social, economic, cultural and political affairs
- Enables women to understand United Nations, European and domestic legislation, conventions and policies that focus or impact on women and to use them to advocate for equality
- Consults with women in preparing recommendations for discussion with government and institutions at domestic, European and international level
- Represents Northern Ireland women at European and international levels
- Jointly represents the UK on the European Women's Lobby with partners in England, Scotland and Wales, and works with sister organisations in Ireland and across Europe
- Secures opportunities for women's organisations to attend European and international events through its EWL and UN membership.

Summary

1. Northern Ireland's peace process which has historically failed to include women or represent women and girls' interests meaningfully. The resistance to this situation can be related to a number of factors such as:

- the lack of political will to acknowledge and respond to the need to address gender inequalities during the peace negotiations where the focus was predominantly on the 'religious' divide;
- the lack of understanding of international conventions, treaties and resolutions such as UN Security Council Resolution 1325[1] and its principles among policy makers, officials and political representatives;
- an absence of leadership in ensuring that women's equality was a key factor in the establishment of new post conflict institutions

1 http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDO...0/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement

2. **Mechanisms previously set up to deal with the legacy of the conflict, such as**

Healing Through Remembering and the Consultative Group on the Past, continue to be composed mainly of men with no recognition that women should be equally represented if peace is to be sustained.

3. Furthermore, new policies structures and legislation post conflict Northern Ireland have not drawn on the skills and expertise of the women who at a local community level have been the peace builders. The substantive inequalities which women in Northern Ireland continue to experience clearly demonstrates the need for it increasing women in politics and decision making roles. The top priorities of areas of inequalities are:

- the risk of poverty
- participation in politics
- participation in decision making
- participation in public life
- equality and the overarching issue of caring

4. The evidence points to a failure of the peace process to acknowledge the full impact of the conflict on women and to ensure that women play an equal part in moving Northern Ireland from a post conflict to a peaceful society. The continuing failure to take significant and effective measures to ensure women's equal inclusion has major implications for social and economic development and for a sustainable peace.

5. There is a need both to protect women's rights and support the work of women's organisations in peace-building efforts. It is essential that postconflict reconstruction is seen through a gendered analysis if peace building is to be maintained.

Together: Building a United Community

6. Like so many successive policies the T:BUC Strategy has ignored the relationship between gender and conflict. While the Strategy at para. 1.26 makes reference to a new Gender Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland it gives no indication of what should be included in this Strategy in order to address the inequalities for women to building peace in Northern Ireland. This is a missed opportunity to include women and to address their interests.

7. While para. 1.27 recognises EU Funding for women, this is not sustainable. What are the plans by governments to ensure future funding of women's groups and organisations in order to maintain and develop peacebuilding. The 'invisibility' of women is also apparent in the distribution of resources since the peace process for example £110m which had been ear-marked for a Northern Ireland stadium went to three sporting bodies – football, Gaelic football and rugby – all dominated by men. This represented a careful sharing out of resources between the religious groupings but no thought was given to the decision from a gender impact perspective.

8. The impact of the conflict on women's lives has not been adequately addressed or indeed sufficiently researched and understood. But research on the psychological impact of the conflict suggests a relationship between higher levels of mental illness in Northern Ireland and the conflict. For some time Northern Ireland has had high per head anti-depressant prescription items.[2] Those being prescribed include for children and adolescents.

9. The T:BUC strategy also suggests changes to the Equality Impact Assessments (EQUIAs) required under "section 75 statutory equality duty. These proposals as they stand undefined and contentious, both in the document and in law, risk undermining the gender equality duty.

2 Gray, AM and Horgan, G (2009) Figuring it Out: Looking Behind the Social Statistics in Northern Ireland. Belfast: ARK

10. Key Priority 1: Children and Young People: This is a 'catch all' action plan which does not make reference to the different needs between young girls/women and boys/men.

11. In the work of NIWEP and other agencies such as Youth Action NI the pessimism about women's representation and ability to influence decisions in peacebuilding is reinforced by the increasing disengagement of young women from politics, and the danger that young women will increasingly see this lack of participation as the norm.

12. Research has shown that the conflict had a profound effect on the lives of young women in Northern Ireland. However, the policy and resource focus continues to be predominantly on young men who are more likely to become engaged in violence. Young women saw politics in Northern Ireland as tribal and sectarian and saw little value even in voting. An in-depth study of 16-25 year old young women reported they were very disaffected by Northern Ireland politics and felt disengaged from the peace building process.[3]

13. Priority 2: Our Shared Community: In addition to the lack of women in electoral politics and the low numbers of women appointed to public bodies (only one woman in twelve members was appointed to the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation Board, established in 2011 to oversee the development of a peace centre at the former paramilitary prison), it has been argued that women are being increasingly marginalised within community organisations. This is endorsed by our partners in Womens Information Northern Ireland (WINI)

14. Ensuring women are part of the peace building 'space' through negotiations has also failed. The Haass / O'Sullivan talks, which began in the autumn of 2013, was tasked to deal with the legacy of the past and ongoing issues such as flags and parades. The draft report, published following the failure of the talks to reach agreement in December 2013, mentions gender only once, as one of a list of possible themes for consideration through a Commission on Identity, Culture and Tradition.

15. In a recent inquiry on the impact of the peace process on women held by the All Party Group on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 at the Northern Ireland Assembly the mood was deeply pessimistic amongst women in local communities, representatives from expert NGOs and representatives of statutory bodies working on gender issues. Time and again it was argued that without appropriate and robust intervention nothing will change with regard to women's representation and that, in fact, the picture will regress further.

16. While the commitment in the T:BUC Strategy identifies Community Safety (para. 3.22) as an issue it does not recognise any long term commitment in addressing the issue in post-conflict societies where domestic and sexual violence against women often increases or intensifies and there is anecdotal evidence that there has been an increase in incidences of domestic and sexual violence in Northern Ireland since the signing of the Good Friday/ Belfast agreement. While the gathering of informal testimonies from organisations, including the Women's Resource and Development Agency indicates this is linked to the conflict, no research has been carried out to properly assess this and there is no commitment within the T:BUC strategy to implement this assessment.

17. In the Community Safety section of the strategy there is a long term commitment to better parenting (para. 3.31). NIWEP wish to focus specifically on the lack of childcare policy and infrastructure as an overarching issue restricting women's participation, their ability to gain economic independence and contributing to persistently high levels of family poverty. While the NI Executive has produced a Brightstart Programme for affordable and integrated childcare Northern Ireland is unique in the UK in not having a childcare strategy.

3 Gray, AM and Neill, G (2011) Creating a Shared Society in Northern Ireland: Why we need to focus on gender equality, Youth and Society, 43,2, 466-485

Recommendations:

1. The efforts of women in peace building should be recognized and resourced to enable the commitments of the Good Friday Agreement in relationship to women to be met.

2. There should be a clear definition of Good relations. Good relations should be defined in law as it is in Great Britain as - “tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.” This would facilitate the use of international instruments such as the Convention on all forms of Discrimination against Women to assist with the interpretation of the statutory duty towards women. This would include the duty to have due regard to Violence against Women including the trafficking of women and children.

3. Good relations criteria should not be included in EQIAS in a way that undermines the gender equality legislation.

4. The childcare strategy and Gender Equality Strategy, which are referenced in the T:BUC strategy should be underpinned by the principles of UNSCR 1325 on Women Peace and Security.

5. The strategy should have mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the principles across the strategy and to develop ways in which to make change to address gender inequalities.

6. To commit to ensuring gender issues are a priority and there is gender balance in those attending any future strategy discussions.

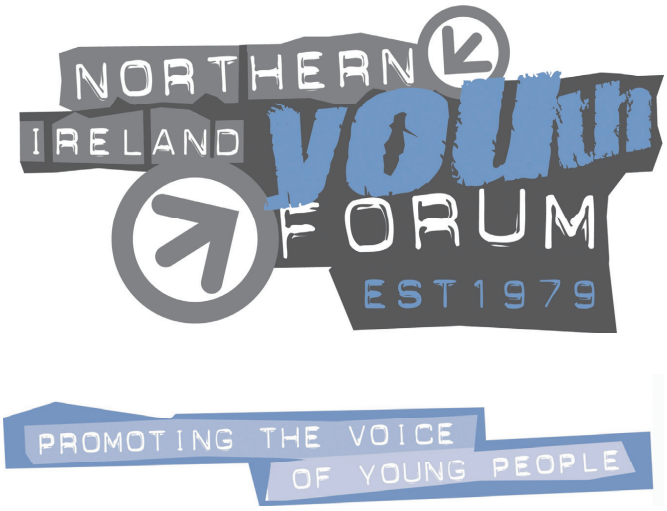
7. To ensure sustainable funding for the infrastructure of support organisations and high level policy and provision to address violence against women.

8. To develop an overarching strategy to adequately resource women’s groups and organisations in order to ensure the wealth of knowledge and expertise is supported to make a greater contribution to building and sustaining peace in Northern Ireland and elsewhere.

Northern Ireland Youth Forum

Response to Consultation;

The Inquiry into Building a United Community on behalf of OFMDFM



Northern Ireland Youth Forum
October 2014

The Northern Ireland Youth Forum's (NIYF), Champions 4 Change Project welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Inquiry into Building a United Community on behalf of OFMDFM.

The NIYF aspires to supporting young people to effect change in their communities and we are strong advocates of young people as emerging leaders. The NIYF prides its self in involving young people in the policy making process and supporting young people to engage directly with decision makers at the very highest levels. Young people make up one third of the population of the North of Ireland and have a vital role to play in effecting social change.

We aim to support young people and to help build their self-confidence and belief in themselves, so that they can raise and discuss issues of importance to them. The NIYF's work is cross community in nature and focuses on social issues. We place equality, diversity, independence and interdependence central to our ethos. We believe that all young people should be listened to and respected and we place understanding and acceptance of cultural and political diversity at the forefront of our work. We work to achieve a situation of empowerment – where young people are proactive in the decision making process.

The NIYF, in partnership with BYTES manages a Big Lottery funded project entitled 'Champions 4 Change' (C4C). The C4C project encapsulates the t youth model of the NIYF:

1/ Personal Change – The belief in young people to affect personal change.
2/ Peer Change – The belief in young people to assist and support their peers
3/ Community Change – The belief in young people collectively to affect change at a community level.
4/ Societal Change – The belief in young people to bring about change in wider society; at local, national and international levels.

The C4C programme seeks to engage young people aged 16-20, who are in Need of Employment, Education or Training. It aims to develop their ability to make personal change and influence peer, community and societal change.

Methodology

As part of this process, C4C staff engaged with twenty-three young people from a diverse range of religious, political, academic and economic backgrounds - to discuss their views on the 'Together Building A United Community' strategy launched by OFMDFM in May 2013.

To facilitate discussion the young people were provided with the following information:

'Together Building A United Community'

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is undertaking an Inquiry into Building a United Community

What is the Inquiry about?

The purpose of the inquiry is to inform the governments approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance; and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision-making. The Inquiry will also seek to make recommendations based on the evidence gathered.

What is it they want us to look at?

What is 'Sectarianism'?
What is meant by 'Division'?
What is meant by 'Good Relations'?
What is meant by 'Shared Space'?
What is meant by 'Shared Services'?
How can 'Sectarianism' be addressed?
How can 'Division' be addressed?
How can we promote 'Good Relations'?
How can we promote 'Shared Space' and 'Shared Services'?
What are the unique challenges of interfaces?
How can we respond to the unique challenges of interfaces?
What role do we each play in the above and what role do our communities play?

Background information

Essentially, you are being asked to consider the reasons for the ongoing difficulties that our communities experience in moving from a conflict society to a more peaceful society and to consider ways in which these difficulties can be overcome at both a community and governmental levels. At the heart of this inquiry is whether or not we can and should live together i.e. shared housing, recreational facilities, education etc… However, this does not mean that to achieve one you must agree with the other. Most venues within the city centre would be seen as shared spaces; pubs, shops, restaurants, cinema etc…however these can be maintained and indeed developed further without people having to be educated together or living next to each other.

Group Discussions Agenda

1/ Who or what is OFMDFM?
2/ What is the role of a government-sponsored committee?
3/What is this inquiry about? Why have it?
4/What is it they want us to look at?
5/Given the information you have discussed thus far, are we looking at the right things? Is there anything else? What do you see is the major problem in your area?

Before we commenced the process of getting the young people to discuss what they thought of the inquiry into the 'Together Building a United Community' strategy, we held informal discussions with them to improve their knowledge and understanding of who and what OFMDFM is, what government committees seek to do and what the original TBUC strategy said.

Summary of Group discussions

What is 'Sectarianism'? How can 'Sectarianism' be addressed?
The young people agreed that sectarianism can mean different things to different people in other places outside of the North of Ireland, however they defined it within their living experiences as; conflict between Catholics and Protestants. This conflict can be violent in its nature, but now is usually limited to verbal disagreements along Political/Religious lines. They gave examples of the flag protests following the removal of the Union Flag, The protests following the Orange Order not being allowed to march back from their 12th July commemorations past the Ardoyne shops and the riots that can break out at certain times of the year, particularly near interface areas. They felt that much of these differences are in relation to those who see themselves as British or Northern Irish and those who see themselves as Irish.
The majority of the young people felt that it was mostly adults who displayed sectarian views and they indicated that they wanted to "move away from all that" and "we don't care what people are or what they believe". Interestingly, when we explored the out workings of these statements they had very clear views. When asked; should the union flag fly above the city hall, or should it fly along side the tricolour or should no flag fly? They all had very clear and divergent views. Equally, when they were asked about "Should there be a United Ireland?" Their responses reflected their opinions on the flags issue. It would therefore seem that whilst many young people do not perceive themselves as sectarian, in that they would not engage in sectarian violence or verbal insults, they do hold similar views that often result in such violence.
Given that they hold similar views to those who engage in sectarianism, they were then asked, "How can sectarianism be addressed?" The vast majority of the young people indicated that;

- Integrated and shared education has a role to play.
- Getting opportunities to meet and discuss controversial issues with each other
- Politicians should be careful as to what they say and how they say it.
- The media has a role to play.
- The youth sector has a role to play.

What does 'Division' mean? How can 'Division' be addressed?
Whilst all of the participants agreed that there are many divisions within communities and wider society e.g. housing estates (social housing), private housing developments (people from working class communities who can afford to buy their own house), middle class areas and upper class areas. They defined 'division' within this inquiry as meaning Catholics and Protestants living separately. However, like their description of housing division, they described areas were being a Catholic or a Protestant didn't seem to matter much, at least in terms of feeling divided. These tended to be large social housing estates were you have safety in numbers; private housing developments in close proximity to your original area of residence and middle/upper class areas were they didn't seem to care about the issues that divide people. Where they felt division affects most people was;

- In interface areas. They expressed the view that the fear you might have of the "other side" is nearly directly proportionate to the distance you live from an interface.
- Whilst many of them agreed that we should be aiming towards a society where people can live safely where they like, 'where' might also be with people who share the same political and religious views as yourself. This view was particularly expressed when the young people were discussing their expressed support for shared housing and they were asked "in such shared housing developments could you display your cultural, religious or indeed sporting identity safely"?

The young people identified the same issues that need to be considered as outlined within their discussions on sectarianism;

- Integrated and shared education has a role to play.
- Getting opportunities to meet and discuss controversial issues with each other
- Politicians should be careful as to what they say and how they say it.
- The media has a role to play.
- The Youth Work Sector.

Having discussions about how we respect peoples right to be different and how we promote tolerance. It was suggested that;

- These could be undertaken in existing drop in centres in both Catholic and Protestant areas, interface projects, youth provision and schools.
- Some of the young people expressed the view that paramilitary's still exert too much influence on their communities. This leads to community fears to engage with the other community.
- Not forcing interface barriers to come down before people are ready for them to come down, but getting communities to justify why they need to stay up.

What is 'Good Relations'? How can we promote 'Good Relations'?
In answering the previous questions the young people felt that they were covering the same issues. They expressed the view that good relations was about respecting your neighbours and neighboring communities. This included people from minority backgrounds as well as different political opinions. Like their previous responses, they felt that education about differences and the opportunity to explore these was at the heart of developing and improving relationships. One of the young people summed up the groups views by saying, "making friends and keeping them, requires constant work. Sometimes you need to agree to have a different opinion on things and not try to get your mate to always agree with you. Relationships in our communities requires you to do the same thing"

What is 'Shared Space' and 'Shared Services'? How can we promote 'Shared Space' and 'Shared Services'?
Through brainstorming exercises the young people identified the following as examples of shared services; hospitals, cinemas, concerts, city centre shops, restaurants and pubs, some leisure centres, some public transport, the response from the fire or ambulance services and the services we receive from our councils.
Through the same exercise they identified; city centres, concerts, some council parks, further education colleges and universities and places were people work as shared space. The young people highlighted that what they had identified as shared spaces and services were shared because the issues that divided people are largely ignored and/or are unknown in theses places.
When we posed the question "when do you think people will be able to live together and openly share their culture, religious, sporting, political beliefs etc…" they replied "what's the life expectancy of our current politicians"? (A reference to, things won't change until we get rid of our current politicians) and "about 15 – 20 years" (This was the timespan chosen by all groups, despite meeting at different times and locations)
When we asked how could we promote both, the young people identified;

- Integrated and shared education has an important role to play in promoting the tolerance and respect necessary to allow people to share space and services.
- Political leadership that supports a shared society.
- Political progress can lead to greater opportunities for jobs and employment. This in turn can lead to greater use of shared space.
- Local councils should look at ways in which council facilities, such as leisure centres can be safely used by everyone
- The government should support trips for young people to visit different countries experiencing conflict or who have recently experienced conflict to learn from them.
- Communities need to be fully informed about the specific cost of

providing separate services and the urgent need to address duplication.

- Opportunities to engage in meaningful discussions about the issues that divide us (They specifically identified the youth work sector as having a role within this).

As noted above the participants were cautious as to the value of identifying shared space/services as indicators of progress, given the often-superficial contact that occurred within them.

What are the unique challenges of interfaces? How can we respond to the unique challenges of interfaces?

As previously mentioned the young people were unanimous in saying that Interface communities need to be fully included in the process to taking interface barriers down. They were aware from the discussions that took place during this part of the process that many interfaces bore the brunt of the violence in the past and that this has left a lasting impression on those who live close to them. Not least in the continued fear and mistrust of those living on the other side. However, the young people felt that sufficient time had progressed for there to be a need to be able to justify the maintenance of all of these barriers. They would suggest that an assessment is made of each interface barrier and that there continued existence would need to be supported by the views of local residents, community leaders and local politicians and a security assessment that supported the retention of them. One of the groups that were consulted with lived in close proximity to an interface. They were unanimous in their belief that the wall dividing them from the “other-side” could not come down for at least 15 – 20 years. In fact their fear at it coming down in the foreseeable future was palpable.

Conclusion

- The young people have a clear understanding as to the nature and causes of sectarianism. Although they would not perceive themselves as sectarian, they hold similar political views as to those that divide us.

  The participants were clear in their beliefs that;

- Our education system, including the youth sector, has a role to play.
- There needs to be strong political leadership.
- Political leadership that supports a shared society.
- The media has a role to play to ensure that “Good News” stories are reported.
- Interfaces can only come down when communities are ready for it.
- Each interface should be kept under period review.
- Cross Community “Youth Zones” should be established.
- Young people should be encouraged to undertake international travel that promotes peace building and conflict resolution skills/awareness.

- The influence of paramilitary groups needs to be tackled.
- Local Councils need to proactively support Shared Space.
- The specific financial costs of division need to be highlighted.

Oakgrove Integrated College

Dear Clerk of the Committee -

Consultation on a United Community

I write on behalf of students and staff of Oakgrove Integrated College, Derry-Londonderry, to offer thoughts on the consultation.

For 22 years, this school has sought to encourage students and staff to learn together and to explore issues of division. We have felt strongly that there are initiatives within an integrated school setting which are impossible in any other school model. We feel strongly, therefore, that more effort needs to be made to find a genuinely integrated experience for a greater number of students in Northern Ireland/North of Ireland (NI).

It has been our experience that the work of the Spirit of Enniskillen Trust was unparalleled in terms of its ability to bring together young people across the entire range of schools in NI. Despite the claims that efforts were made to preserve the work, it is the experience of a number of schools that more should have been done to follow up the suggestions of the volunteers and staff. Students and staff in our school who witnessed the benefits of the Spirit of Enniskillen's work would argue that efforts now could be made to restart that scheme so that its good work is not lost. Spirit of Enniskillen provided a unique model of young people leading change, bringing about a transformation in attitudes through emotional rather than intellectual development.

If we are serious about building a united community, then we need to facilitate reconciliation. A wonderful model which we have used is the Theatre of Witness, which allows young people to explore issues in depth and to understand why conflict is still relevant, and the human cost.

We have seen over 22 years that young people can be change leaders and we believe that there is value in young people facilitating discussions of politicians in order to make progress on the issues which divide.

We are happy to help the committee by providing any further information should it be required.

With good wishes,

Yours faithfully,

John Harkin

John Harkin
Vice Principal, Oakgrove Integrated College,
Gransha Park, Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland BT47 6TG
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"If you ever get to the place where injustice doesn't bother you, you're dead." - Myles Horton

Participation and Practice of Rights

Together Building A United Community

OFMDFM Inquiry

A response from the Participation and Practice of Rights (PPR) organisation.

committee.ofmdfm@niassembly.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 The Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) organisation was established in 2006 by internationally renowned trade unionist and human rights activist Inez McCormack. PPR supports disadvantaged groups in Northern Ireland (NI) to make their socio-economic rights real and assert their right to participate in government decisions which affect their lives. PPR enables groups to challenge and change current government decision making practices which exclude them, and which lead to poor service delivery, entrenched inequalities and ineffective use of public money.

1.2 PPR's experience of working on issues relating to economic and social deprivation, with communities impacted by the conflict in Northern Ireland has run in parallel with increasing recognition at the international level of the importance of addressing socio-economic rights abuses and violations in post conflict societies. It is now accepted that the meaningful delivery of transitional justice must include economic and social rights as core to building sustainable peace. A recent publication from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which examines the relationship between transitional justice and socio-economic rights, notes the growing acceptance of this core relationship and recommends that;

"Awareness should be raised among stakeholders about the importance of including relevant violations of economic, social and cultural rights in transitional justice as well as about the latter's potential to deal with such violations[1]*"*

1.3 Socio-economic rights violations and structural inequality were key factors in both the origins of the conflict, and the current unfinished peace. It is with this in mind that PPR wish to contribute to the OFMDFM Committee Inquiry into the Together Building a United Community strategy. It is PPR's intention to base this contribution on our experience of engaging with communities living around interfaces to use a human rights based approach to campaign on issues that mean the most to them, including housing, mental health services, unemployment, welfare and regeneration.

1.4 With specific reference to the Terms of Reference set by the Committee, PPR wish to make the following points.

2. Good Relations & Equality

2.1 The Terms of Reference for this Inquiry specifically make reference to the *"examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services"* as well as a *"consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together"* to develop same. PPR's experience can shed valuable insight on both of these aspects.

[1] (2014) UNOHCHR, *Transitional Justice and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, p.57

From the outset it is vital to note that the Together Building a United Community strategy acknowledges OFMDFM's vision as one of a united community as one which is based upon equality of opportunity;

"Our vision is a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation - one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance."[2]

2.2 Furthermore, the strategy recognises that the statutory duty contained in Section 75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to have due regard to the promotion of equality of opportunity is a higher legal duty than the duty to have regard to the promotion of good relations and that the latter should be done "without prejudice" to the former. The strategy states;

"Therefore, in our decision making and policy implementation, we regard the promotion of equality of opportunity as an essential element in the building of good community relations and consider that good relations cannot and should not be built on a foundation of inequality."[3]

2.3 However PPR's work supporting disadvantaged communities who experience inequalities across a range of indices highlights that despite the above commitments, the government approach to creating what is defined as 'a shared future' has been pursued at the expense of tackling these inequalities.

3. Case Study: Belfast City Centre Waiting List

3.1 Twice in the last five year, the United Nations has called for housing inequality impacting Catholics in North Belfast to be tackled. However, despite the Section 75 (1) statutory obligations opportunities to do so have been lost. One example was the pursuit of a 'shared space' agenda in relation to housing in the city centre, which further disadvantaged those impacted by housing inequality in North Belfast.

3.2 PPR's response to a 2011 Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) consultation regarding the creation of a Belfast City Centre Waiting List highlighted deep concerns with the approach taken by the NIHE in terms of both the failure to promote equality of opportunity and the failure to target objective need. The NIHE's proposals regarded the creation of a new Common Landlord Area which would be used to manage a waiting list of applicants specifically seeking housing in a new and defined Belfast City Centre area.[4]

3.3 The approach taken by the NIHE in this consultation inappropriately placed the policy objective of creating 'a shared future' over the legal requirement to have due regard to the promotion of equality of opportunity which would include tackling religious inequality. The NIHE decided not to draw from the existing waiting list and not to allocate on the basis of objective need, for no other reason than this would involve the allocation of more homes to Catholics, on the basis that they were disproportionately represented as being in housing stress (63 offers would go to Catholics, 4 to Protestants and 25 going to undisclosed in the

[2](2013) OFMDFM, *Together Building a United Community* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.3
[3] (2013) OFMDFM, *Together Building a United Community* http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf p.15
[4] For further please see (2013) PPR, *Equality Can't Wait*, Chapter 4 http://issuu.com/ppr-org/docs/equality_can_t_wait

event of 100 units becoming available). This option, was rejected as it would not result in the desired 'shared city centre living space'.

3.4 Despite PPR (and others) identifying over fifteen misapplications of the statutory obligations in our response to this consultation and pointing to the clear need for a full Equality Impact Assessment, the policy was passed un-amended by the NIHE Board in January 2012.

3.5 PPR would encourage the Committee to ensure that the legal priority given to the promotion of equality of opportunity is reflected by the Inquiry in all considerations on the promotion of good relations and the creation of shared spaces.

3.6 PPR would seek to underline the necessity of tackling socio-economic inequalities and deprivation as a prerequisite to building good relations. A truly shared future for those who suffer some of the most chronic deprivation in Northern Ireland, including those living at interfaces, must be based on effectively tackling the inequalities that they experience – across housing, health, education, employment, etc. That segregation and division is a feature of life in certain areas of Northern Ireland, particularly interface areas is hardly surprising considering the history, and the continued presence, of conflict in these areas. Government figures released in 2010 by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) demonstrated that the top 20 most deprived Super Output Areas in Northern Ireland are still concentrated in North Belfast, West Belfast and Derry. The same measurement taken in 2005 showed the same profile, and highlighted government failure to address objective need in these areas.

Table 1

	Top 20 Most Deprived Areas 2005 (MDM)		**Top 20 Most Deprived Areas 2010 (MDM)`**	
1	Whiterock_2	Belfast	Whiterock_2	Belfast
2	Shankill_2	Belfast	Whiterock_3	Belfast
3	Falls_2	Belfast	Falls_2	Belfast
4	Crumlin_2_Belfast	Belfast	Falls_3	Belfast
5	Whiterock_3	Belfast	New Lodge_1	Belfast
6	Falls_3	Belfast	Shankill_2	Belfast
7	Shankill_1	Belfast	Crumlin_2_Belfast	Belfast
8	New Lodge_2	Belfast	Falls_1	Belfast
9	New Lodge_1	Belfast	Ardoyne_3	Belfast
10	Ballymacarrett_3	Belfast	Creggan Central_1	Derry
11	Creggan Central_1	Derry	Upper Springfield_3	Belfast
12	Upper Springfield_3	Belfast	East	Strabane
13	Ardoyne_3	Belfast	Clonard_1	Belfast
14	Falls_1	Belfast	New Lodge_2	Belfast
15	New Lodge_3	Belfast	New Lodge_3	Belfast
16	Brandywell	Derry	Collin Glen_3	Lisburn
17	Duncairn_1	Belfast	Twinbrook_2	Lisburn
18	Woodvale_3	Belfast	Shankill_1	Belfast
19	Crumlin_1_Belfast	Belfast	Duncairn_1	Belfast
20	Ardoyne_2	Belfast	Upper Springfield_1	Belfast

3.7 Working with communities, even those traditionally viewed as "divided", to design proposals which would effectively address such deprivation has been a key element of PPR's work. The most significant example of this is the cross community Girdwood Residents Jury, the learning from which is detailed in the following case study, and is offered as a best practice example of bringing communities together.

4. Case Study: Girdwood Residents Jury

4.1 In 2008, PPR organised and convened the Girdwood Residents' Jury to consider the planned regeneration of Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol in North Belfast (estimated cost £231 million). The Jury was composed of residents from the five wards immediately surrounding the 27 acre site (Ardoyne, Crumlin, New Lodge, Shankill and Waterworks), and were of diverse gender, religion, political opinion, marital and dependent status, and disability status. PPR carried out a development programme with them which involved considering both the potential of the Girdwood site and the human rights and equality obligations on government (both domestic and international) to ensure deprived communities felt the benefit of the public investment the regeneration would entail.

4.2 The group developed a set of human rights indicators capable of monitoring progress, or otherwise, in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment, development of proposals, budget and monitoring stages of the regeneration process. The aim was to monitor whether the responsible government departments, DSD (Department for Social Development) and OFMDFM (Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister) were discharging their equality commitments in a way that fulfilled their legal obligations, promoted a targeted and effective use of public money, and produced tangible and measurable outcomes for the chronically deprived communities which surrounded the site.

4.3 The Girdwood Residents Jury achieved what many outsiders would consider impossible – agreement how money and land situated at a North Belfast interface should be used. Using international and domestic standards on equality and human rights, the diverse cross community group set down a framework for delivering the regeneration that would ensure that the deprivation and inequalities impacting all the areas would be tackled. They also developed progressive proposals (contained in the paper 'The Girdwood Gamble') aimed at creating ring fenced jobs and apprenticeships for those furthest from the labour market, including plans for skills development, and monitoring and evaluation. The powers to deliver these proposals lay in the equality provisions of s75 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), and had been based on a Department of Finance and Personnel Pilot Project carried out in 2005 on the provision of ring fenced jobs for the long-term unemployed in government contracts. The Pilot Project was evaluated by the University of Ulster which concluded that it was effective, economical, effective, efficient, and did not breach any European legislation. Furthermore, the University noted that adopting such an approach to projects such as the new campus, "could make a significant impact to reducing unemployment and social welfare payments."

4.4 These proposals were presented to officials in the DSD and OFMDFM with responsibility for the regeneration but were not accepted. The group in turn wrote to the First and Deputy First Minister with their proposals several times, who are ultimately accountable for human rights obligations. Finally, they received a response by the First and Deputy First Minister asking them not to continue writing to either the FM/DFM on this issue, and instead to engage with the civil servants.

4.5 Six years on, refined versions of these proposals have been adopted as a best practice model, including by Belfast City Council through its cross-community ratification of the REAL JOBS NOW motion and through the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure's

inclusion of equality based social clauses in procurement contracts for the redevelopment of Ravenhill, Windsor and Casement stadia. Outcomes have yet to be seen, and the people directly affected by unemployment who are working hard for their proper implementation continue their campaign. However the Girdwood Residents Jury is a practical example domestically of how human rights and equality can be a powerful tool to unite communities and encourage meaningful participation from across the political spectrum.

6. The Role of Communities

6.1 PPR would like to respond to the OFMDFM Committee's request for information on the issues to be addressed and the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers.

6.2 PPR's experience working in the most deprived areas of North Belfast over the last 8 years has been that the issues such as housing, jobs, and places for children to play are not simply ancillary to issues of division and segregation; rather they are priorities which are considered central to the delivery of the Good Friday Agreement. .

6.3 In 2010, in a project commissioned by Belfast City Council, PPR worked with a broad range of community organisations from interfaces in North and West Belfast to produce a toolkit entitled "Building Sustainable Communities: Urban Regeneration and Interface Communities". The toolkit outlines an evidenced based approach which maximises outcomes through the efficient and effective use of public monies. It was developed with the interface workers who identified a methodology for urban regeneration at interface areas based on equality standards. Most importantly, the toolkit promotes an approach which is based on the capacity and commitment of those who live within these communities, which was key to it attracting support. This document is available from Belfast City Council or on request from PPR.

7. Conclusion

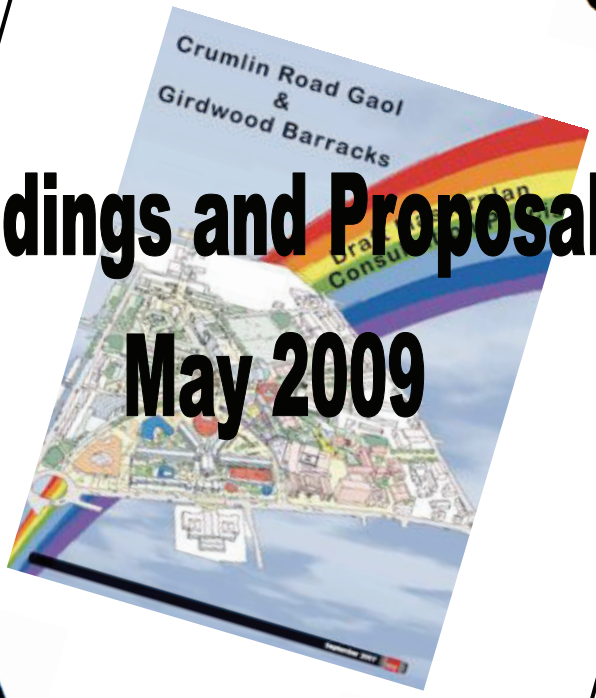
7.1 Through active participation and a rights framework our groups have disproved the notion that communities cannot find solutions to so-called 'contentious' issues. However, we would caution against a model that attempts to engage communities in decision-making, which has a pre-determined end point – in this case the removal of interface barriers. As no doubt many other contributions will highlight – the people affected must decide when this is appropriate, and the top-down imposition of this as a priority to meet a government target will not aid this process.

7.2 A copy of Girdwood Gamble and a Factsheet on the REAL JOBS NOW motion is enclosed with this submission.

7.3. For more information, please contact Kate Ward, Policy and Research Support Officer at kate@pprproject.org.

October 2014

The Girdwood Gamble



Findings and Proposals

May 2009

Girdwood Residents' Jury

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Glossary of Terms

DSD	Department for Social Development
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
NBCAU	North Belfast Community Action Unit
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
PPR	Participation and the Practice of Rights Project

gam·ble
v. **gam·bled**, **gam·bling**, **gam·bles**
v.intr.
1.
a. To bet on an uncertain outcome, as of a contest.
b. To play a game of chance for stakes.
2. To take a risk in the hope of gaining an advantage or a benefit.
3. To engage in reckless or hazardous behaviour



The Stakes

The regeneration of Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol is a £231 million investment into the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. This investment is the one off opportunity to begin changing the patterns of inequality and deprivation which have produced unacceptable realities for these communities.

Since the 1994 ceasefire, north Belfast rates of workless households have not reduced. Housing waiting lists and inequality have increased. Educational attainment in the most deprived wards has shown no sign of turning. Suicide rates have skyrocketed in the north Belfast parliamentary constituency, rising from being ranked 319th to the 11th highest in the UK. Our society has produced a 'lost generation' of young people aged between the ages of 16-25 who have seen no tangible improvement in their social and economic opportunities.

The Girdwood Gamble

Nobody has the right to gamble this one-off opportunity "on an uncertain outcome". To do so, without question, would be to engage in "reckless or hazardous behaviour".

Yet the Draft Masterplan for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Raod Gaol, and the Draft Equality Impact Assessment, are 'gambles'. They are gambles because the supposed benefits to the community are vague, ambiguous, undefined and uncertain. Available detailed statistics and evidence of best practice were not used. These could and should have been used to put solid building blocks in place which would have enabled proposals to be developed, measured, and monitored to ensure effective change in the current conditions of local communities.

Yesterday's Losses

In January 2008, a report by Regional Forecasts (a division of Oxford Economic Ltd) described Belfast's economy as follows:

"The Belfast economy is growing, investment in the city centre continues, house prices rise and increased traffic flow reflects the city's increasing desirability as a place to both live and work. However, many parts of Belfast remain 'untouched' by recent growth…"

Yet the objective of this public expenditure was precisely to 'touch' and 'change' the realities in the most disadvantaged communities to produce a more healthy and sustainable society. Our rights were breached, our futures and public monies were 'gambled' in a 'game' where evidence and analysis of past mistakes were either

ignored or simply weren't considered. Banks and developers did very well. We didn't. As a result, the gap between the prosperous and the poor has widened.

Communities, such as the Markets, Lower Ormeau and Donegall Pass in south Belfast, were losers in processes which, according to law and policy, were supposed to promise them a better and different future.

Evidence given to the Residents' Jury from Ken Humphries of the Church and Community Work Alliance, who worked for the Mornington Project (Lower Ormeau) on the Gasworks regeneration, showed how the employment 'benefits' for the community only delivered more of the same. He cited:

- *18 local people were trained and interviewed for the jobs in Halifax but only one got a job.*
- *There are currently 4500 people employed in the Gasworks out of which 12 come from the local community; 3 call centre workers, 7 cleaners, 1 tea lady and a shop assistant.*
- *None of the business incubation units employ people from the community.*

Yet government sponsored evaluations are calling this a "success". The official post project evaluation for the site (2007) states: *"This [the Gasworks] was a very successful development for Laganside and the Belfast City Council…All key performance indicators have been achieved and exceed (sic) beyond all expectations - even though they were revised upwards following the 1998 review."*

So we are entitled to ask – Who set the indicators? Why did they not include targets to change disadvantage, eg long-term unemployment and economic inactivity?

We have been told by the Minister for Social Development that regeneration projects, such as Girdwood, will learn the lessons of the past through applying learning from such evaluations.

Yet a Freedom of Information request told us that the Gasworks regeneration was the only regeneration project which helped inform the development of the Girdwood regeneration plan.

Michael McGimpsey, MLA for south Belfast, said of the Gasworks regeneration:

"…there are strong lessons to be learned, particularly by City Hall but also by Government Departments and agencies, that local communities effectively, in my view, were let down by a process that was supposed to be very much a partnership with the local community and ended up ignoring the local community."

If the Department uses the same key performance indicators and methodology on Girdwood, there will be the same outcomes. "Success" will again be defined as failing us.

"Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." **Albert Einstein**

Gambling Outlawed

In Northern Ireland there are laws and policies which outlaw these 'gambles' by public bodies:

- Section 75 of the NI Act (1998)
- the tackling of objective need re-affirmed in the St. Andrew's Agreement
- Equality Commission and the Central Procurement Directorate's 'Equality of Opportunity and Sustainable Development in Public Sector Procurement' (2008)
- Northern Ireland Practical Guide to the Green Book (2003)
- NI Executive's Budget and Programme for Government 2008-2011

The responsibility is on the Minister for Social Development to show how these are being effectively used. All of these outline how the government should spend the public's money to create sustainable social and economic development.

Legislative and policy tools have not been applied, or have been mis-applied in a tick-box fashion, and there is no evidence of learning from other regeneration projects which failed disadvantaged communities.

The Girdwood Draft Masterplan was based on a bouyant housing market to finance the plans. The housing market has collapsed. The developer driven model of regeneration has crumbled before our eyes in the UK and Ireland. The hard evidence is that public monies delivered massive returns for the developers and little or no returns for disadvantaged communities.

The economic recession gives us breathing space to ensure that any proposals brought forward promote effective economic and social sustainability through the promotion of equality and addressing of need. We need to ensure that the mistakes that have already been made are corrected for the future so as to guarantee the most effective and efficient expenditure of public resources.

Planning Not Gambling

In the following report you will see that:

- Residents have sought out and documented best practice examples of national and international regeneration initiatives in order to apply the lessons to north Belfast. They have brought in expertise from Maryland and New York (USA), Dublin, and Belfast to inform their proposals;

- Residents have taken national laws and policy tools and attempted to apply them to the Girdwood regeneration process in a constructive, modest and patient fashion;

- Residents have creatively engaged in the equality impact assessment process for Girdwood;

- Residents have developed human rights indicators and benchmarks, in line with international human rights standards and government obligations, in order to steadily and systematically ensure the effectiveness of the regeneration process.

You will find the results of the Residents' Jury's monitoring the performance of the Department for Social Development and North Belfast Community Action Unit in meeting human rights through the Girdwood regeneration to date in this report. It reveals how little the approach of government has changed, even in the face of this economic crisis.

No More Gambles

In the first section of this report, we list a series of concrete steps that should be explored immediately to ensure value for money, the promotion of equality and tackling objective need through the Girdwood regeneration.

These steps would generate training opportunities and a skills base within our community.

These steps would generate employment.

These steps would generate ownership of the regeneration among the surrounding communities.

These steps would deliver on the promise of the peace dividend that has, to date, passed the communities surrounding Girdwood by.

Nothing About Us, Without Us, Is For Us

We are entitled to receive commitments from government that the gambling which damaged our past is no longer allowed to damage our future.

We are entitled to be part of making and measuring change.

We are entitled to a respectful and serious engagement by the Department with our rigorous and detailed work to do that.

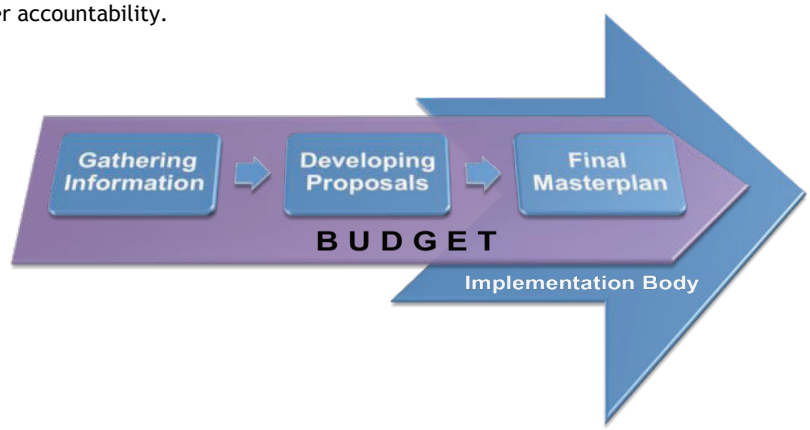
We are entitled to be shown how that engagement will influence and shape this ‘one-off’ opportunity to build a future different from our past.

That was the promise of peace. That was the promise of how we could begin to shape our future and rebuild our communities. We are trying to do our bit. It is long past time that government did theirs.

BACKGROUND

On the 28th May 2008 a Residents' Jury was convened in North Belfast to consider the regeneration of Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol. The Jury is composed of residents from the five wards surrounding the 27 acre site (Ardoyne, Crumlin, New Lodge, Shankill, Waterworks). They heard evidence and put questions to a wide range of local and international experts on equality, human rights and urban regeneration.

The Residents' Jury used the information from the Jury event to set human rights indicators to measure whether the regeneration fulfilled government's obligations under human rights law to improve their right and that of their communities to work, education, adequate housing and the highest attainable standard of health. The Girdwood regeneration is at a very early stage and is expected to take 10-15 years to complete, although this is very much dependent on financial circumstances. The Jury, therefore, wanted to focus on the regeneration **process**, *ie* how to ensure that the process itself ensures residents' participation, promotes equality, and that there is proper accountability.



The Jury launched their findings on the 30th October 2008 and have committed to monitoring the following parts of the early regeneration has been conducted by the NBCAU on behalf of the DSD. This has taken place through the Equality Impact Assessment process – which is a process public bodies go through to ensure that their actions promote equality.

The results of this monitoring are in the following pages.

PROPOSALS ON THE WAY FORWARD

1. Regeneration: Developing skills within the community

Substantial numbers of local people from the five wards surrounding Girdwood (New Lodge, Waterworks, Crumlin, Shankill, Ardoyne), and reflective of Section 75 groups (different age, gender, ability, religion, political opinion, sexual orientation, dependent status, marital status, race) should be trained to play an active role as data collectors and data analysts in the initial stages of the regeneration process in order to produce a baseline analysis of the nature and effect of inequality in the communities. This analysis would be used to assist in developing targeted proposals and, against which, to measure the success of proposals.

This would involve:

- allocating a budget for an accredited skills development programme including confidence building, research methodology and techniques, and analytical skills
- exploring possibilities with other government departments (for example the Department for Employment and Learning) of turning this process into a 'path to employment' programme for residents currently out of work

Examples of where a similar approach has worked elsewhere:

- Oakland Community Interviews (California, USA)
- SECO Pharmacy Suitability (Maryland, USA)

2. Regeneration: Developing effective and targeted proposals

Proposals must be targeted at the inequalities and needs in our community. No-one is better placed to explore these than residents themselves who have experience of previous governmental interventions which have both succeeded and failed. This would have to be carried out following the baseline analysis being conducted as above.

This would involve:

- allocating a budget for residents to be able to access training and technical assistance in urban planning with a view to producing effective proposals which have the capacity to promote equality and address need
- exploring possibilities with other government departments (for example the Department for Employment and Learning) of turning this process into a 'path to employment' programme for residents currently out of work

Examples of where a similar approach has worked elsewhere:

- Greenpoint Initiated Community Plan (NY, USA)
- South Bronx, Melrose (NY, USA)

3. Regeneration: Tackling long-term unemployment

In advance of the construction work, and in tandem with above processes, part of data collection would be taking an audit of the skills base within the surrounding communities and identifying obstacles to employment. Major training initiatives to enhance the skills base of those groups disproportionately affected by unemployment and economic inactivity in advance of any jobs on site would be required. This would also require targeted outreach. It would enable local people to be better placed to avail of procurement equality targets in advance of construction. Additionally once private sector investment has been secured, training should be carried out well in advance for the same reason as above.

This would involve:

- Gathering accurate information on employment statistics and carrying out a comprehensive skills audit in the surrounding communities as part of the data collection phase
- An outreach strategy to engage workless residents on barriers to employment and what elements need to be implemented to ensure training benefits the long-term unemployed
- Cross-departmental intervention with community based training and employment organisations to devise programmes which would develop the skills base of long term unemployed residents
- Effective and substantive measures to promote equality built into the procurement process

Examples of where a similar approach has worked elsewhere:

- Pilot Project on Utilising the Unemployed in Public Contracts (Sept 2005, Northern Ireland)
- West Belfast Greater Shankill Health Partnership

4. Regeneration: Ensuring Success

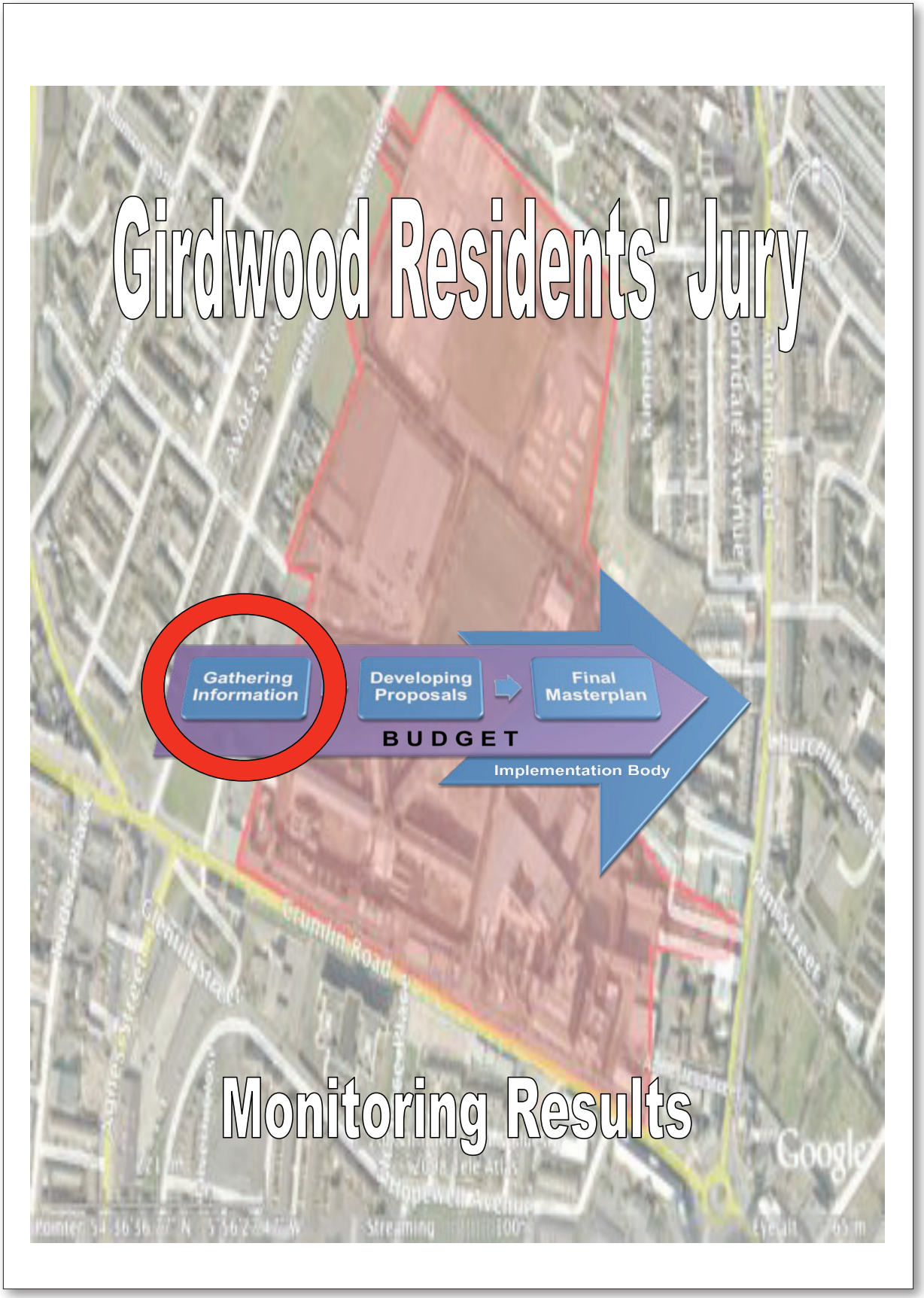
Local residents should be provided with the skills and knowledge to engage in monitoring the implementation and assisting in carrying out the evaluation of the Girdwood regeneration. As with the data collection/analysis and development of proposals, this would involve local people actively acting as 'evaluators' of the regeneration projects. Again, this is something which is often siphoned off at significant costs to private sector consultants. However if effective training was available, these skills would be created, and would reside, in the community.

This would involve:

- allocating a budget for residents to be able to access training and technical assistance in participatory monitoring and evaluation
- exploring possibilities with other government departments (for example the Department for Employment and Learning) of turning this process into a 'path to employment' programme for residents currently out of work

Examples of where a similar approach has worked elsewhere:

- National Neighborhood Indicators Project (Maryland, USA)
- Seven Towers Monitoring Group (Belfast)
- NeighborWorks/DLN Success Measures Project (USA)


Girdwood Residents' Jury
Gathering Information
Developing Proposals
Final Masterplan
BUDGET
Implementation Body
Monitoring Results

Naming the groups experiencing inequality in north Belfast...

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

The following table shows what groups were identified in the EQIA as experiencing inequality and therefore in need of concrete proposals to address their problems:

ISSUE	GROUPS IN EQIA
employment	none
education	none
health	none
housing	catholic/nationalist

The Jury found that alot of the information collected through public sector bodies and community groups in north Belfast was not used for the EQIA.



The failure to identify groups in need of positive action across all issues except housing means that proposals for Girdwood cannot be targeted to specifically address their long standing issues.

What must be done:

It is important to realise that this indicator is essential if proposals for the regeneration are to successfully target vulnerable groups in our areas in order to promote equality. The DSD must identify who these groups are in north Belfast in the final EQIA.

A1 Have the most vulnerable groups in north Belfast been named in the EQIA through the gathering of statistical information on inequality and deprivation?

See Appendix Two for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

11

Gathering people's experience of inequality in north Belfast…

A2
Have the experiences of vulnerable groups living with deprivation and inequality been collected?

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Interviews should have been carried out and focus groups with residents held to reveal the affects of disadvantage and inequality on residents' lives and what the barriers are to overcoming these. This would then help to develop proposals to address the problems.

It is difficult to meet this indicator if residents experiencing inequality haven't even been identified by the DSD (A1).

The DSD did carry out focus groups with the community, however they were not about developing targeted proposals, but were used to comment on existing ones – ones that had been develop without considering equality.

An indication of the outcomes of such a methodology is that despite widespread focus groups, no concrete or definite changes to the Masterplan are to be brought forward following the Draft EQIA other than possibly changing the design of the Arc Road. The DSD has not met this indicator.

What must be done:

Some of the focus groups carried out by the community groups and DSD have information relevant to this indicator. However only after groups have been identified (A1) can their experiences be collected properly. If carried out, it will give good insight into the effects of deprivation – but more importantly will show why government's past attempts to tackle these problems have failed and what is required to tackle the problems.

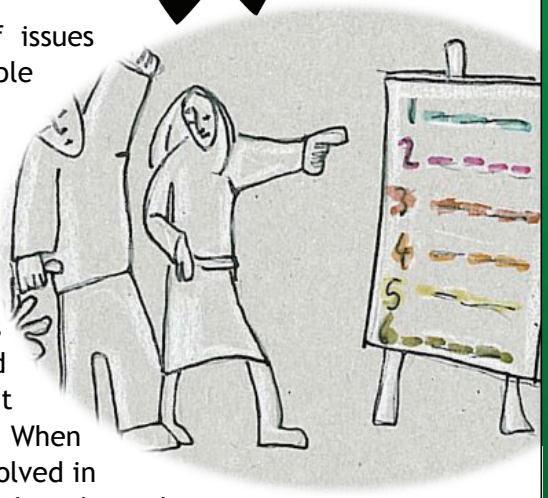
See Appendix Three for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

12

Prioritising issues important to people in north Belfast...

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No



There should be a list of issues and priorities which people experiencing inequality and deprivation say need to be addressed.

Again, however, it is extremely difficult to meet this indictor if those groups haven't been identified and their experiences haven't been gathered (A1 and A2). When vulnerable groups were involved in the process to date, they did not have the opportunity to meaningfully contribute to the development of proposals. Rather some were asked how proposals in the Draft Masterplan may or may not affect them. Proposals, issues, and priorities had already been developed elsewhere. This indicator was not met by the DSD.

A3 Were identified vulnerable groups involved in naming and prioritising the issues which are most important to them?

What must be done:

Community organised EQIA focus groups involved vulnerable groups identifying and proposing issues. These, however, were not meaningfully included in the Draft EQIA. However this information is still of significant use. Once vulnerable groups have been identified (A1), there will be opportunities for vulnerable groups to name and prioritise issues. This should be done alongside indicator A2.

See Appendix Four for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

13

Making sure information is easy to understand…

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Local residents should be able to understand the EQIA so that they can respond to it effectively.



The Jury found most of the information presented was full of technical language and very difficult to understand. This can be particularly challenging for people without experience with this sort of specialised language. More than that, the overall format, which does not link inequality with proposals, made the EQIA unclear.

Every practical attempt should be made to ensure local residents can meaningfully engage in the EQIA process. Making official documents clear is only a first step in this process.

What must be done:

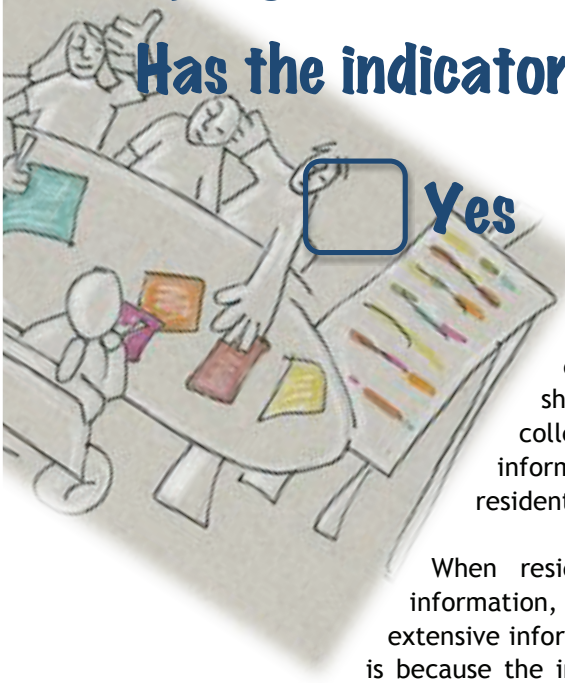
This indicator is not simply about 'style'. If an EQIA clearly shows who experiences inequalities and how proposals are targeted, it goes a long way towards making it understandable. This, however, has not been done.

That being said, the Jury found that the information itself could have been presented in a more interesting and user-friendly format without compromising detail. While the quality and rigour of the document should not be compromised, the production of a summary document using clear language would make it more accessible.

A4
Is the information on inequality and deprivation clear, accessible, and easily understood in the EQIA documents and in the consultation process?

See Appendix Five for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

Involving residents in gathering and analysing the information…



Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Residents experiencing deprivation and inequalities should have been involved in collecting and analysing information from their fellow residents during the EQIA process.

When residents collect and analyse information, it allows more accurate and extensive information to be gathered. This is because the information can be gathered from residents' neighbours and friends – people who are often defined as 'hard to reach'. This is invaluable access which government department's don't have. Additionally, by involving residents experiencing inequalities and deprivation in gathering information, a greater ownership of the regeneration scheme is created among the community.

Residents were involved in EQIA focus groups to provide information, but they were never given the opportunity to collect or analyse that information for themselves. The DSD did not meet this indicator.

What must be done:

As part of the Final EQIA, local residents must be recruited to collect information from other residents on how inequality affects their lives, and ways in which barriers can be removed through proposals for the Girdwood regeneration.

A5
Were residents from identified vulnerable groups involved in collecting and analysing the information during the EQIA process?

See Appendix Six for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

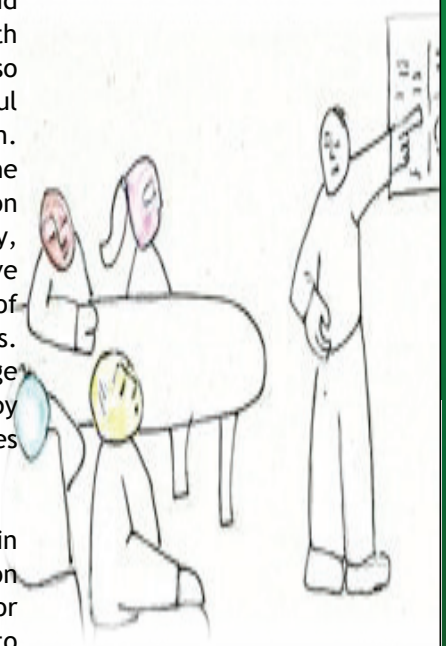
15

Providing training and assistance to local residents…

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Residents experiencing inequalities and deprivation should be provided with independent training and assistance so that they can play a more meaningful role in decisions about regeneration. For the EQIA, this should relate to the collecting and analysing of information that is useful for the EQIA. In this way, more residents would become active participants in the process, instead of being treated merely as observers. They would be able to engage meaningfully in a process which – by law – should benefit the communities most in need.



Because residents were not involved in gathering and analysing information (A5), the DSD cannot meet an indicator which requires those same residents to be trained.

What must be done:

Once vulnerable groups have been identified and recruited (A5), these individuals would then need to receive training and assistance to equip them with the skills required to gather the experiences of local people living with inequality and deprivation.

A6
Was there training and assistance resourced and made accessible by government to enable vulnerable groups to provide, collect and analyse information during the EQIA process?

See Appendix Seven for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

16

Making proposals based on local needs and inequalities…

Has the indicator been met?

☐ Yes ☒ No

There should be evidence of how local deprivation and inequality is being tackled through the proposals for Girdwood. It is not enough to say 'a rising tide lifts all boats' or that certain proposals won't affect different groups badly. All proposals should be targeted at specific inequalities and problems. They must be capable of being monitored for effectiveness. This will make sure our tax monies are spent efficiently and effectively.

As has already been mentioned, the draft EQIA does not include anywhere near enough evidence regarding local deprivation and inequalities to produce a proper understanding of the needs of our communities. How can inequalities be tackled if the same inequalities have not even been identified? The DSD did not meet this indicator.

What must be done:

It is critical that this indicator be met if public resources are to be spent in an effective and efficient way. All proposals for Girdwood must be targeted at tackling some inequality in the community. This requires developing alternative proposals as required by the EQIA process. The following method should be used to develop these proposals:

Specific Inequality (around health, employment, etc.)

↓

Specific proposal to tackle inequality

↓

Targets developed to test whether proposal is effective

A7
Is the evidence regarding local deprivation and inequality being used by government to form proposals?

See Appendix Eight for list of evidence considered when reaching this conclusion

17

APPENDIX ONE

HOW DID THE JURY ARRIVE AT THESE FINDINGS?

The Residents' Jury deliberated on the following evidence when developing their findings:

1. **The Draft Masterplan for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol**
2. **The Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol**
3. **Evidence Collecting Session with two officials from the North Belfast Community Action Unit (13th January 2009)**
4. **Freedom of Information request to the DSD to reveal full details of all focus groups and meetings which took place in the community regarding the Draft EQIA (January 2009)**
5. **Contact with Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency**
6. **Contact with Shankill Job Assist Centre and the Ashton Employment Club**
7. **Analysing the Dunlop Report and work of the Girdwood Advisory Panel**
8. **Analysing Draft EQIA submissions from the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Participation and the Practice of Rights Project, Lower Shankill Community Association, Cliftonville Antrim Road CEP, Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, Brucevale Residents, North Belfast Interface Network, Community Relations Council, North Belfast Partnership Board**
9. **Equality Commission's 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment' (2005)**
10. **Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents Jury (28th May 2008)**
11. **PPR Report 'Unlocking the Potential: Human Rights, Equality and the Draft Masterplan for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol' (January 2008)**
12. **PPR Report 'Changing the Patterns of the Past: Putting People First in the Regeneration of North Belfast' (August 2008)**

In the following pages we outline the evidence which the Girdwood Residents' Jury considered for each indicator.

APPENDIX TWO

A1. Have the most vulnerable groups in north Belfast been named in the EQIA through the gathering of statistical information on inequality and deprivation?

1. Analysing the Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol
According to legislation, information should have been collected regarding inequalities between the following groups in our community: Persons of different -

- Age
- Gender
- Religious Belief
- Dependent Status
- Marital Status
- Political Opinion
- Sexuality
- Race
- With / without disability

The Residents' Jury found that very little information was collected by the North Belfast Community Action Unit during the Draft Equality Impact Assessment to identify inequalities between the named groups under law. In the following table you will see what information was and was not collected which should have assisted in identifying groups experiencing inequality:

	EMPLOYMENT	HEALTH	EDUCATION	HOUSING
Age	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	P38-40
Gender	p.16 , 17, 25	p.25	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION
Religious Belief	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	p.38-40
Dependent Status	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	p.38-40
Marital Status	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	p.38-40
Political Opinion	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION
Sexuality	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION
With / without disability	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION
Race	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION	NO INFORMATION

The only group identified as experiencing inequality were catholics and nationalists in terms of being disproportionately affected by housing stress.

2. Evidence Collecting session with two officials from the North Belfast Community Action Unit
During an Evidence Collecting session with the NBCAU (13th January 2009), evidence provided by officials from the North Belfast Community Action Unit pointed to mitigating circumstances and explanations as to why statistical data on inequality was not presented:

a. Statistics were not readily accessible. The NBCAU relied on NISRA and staff within the DSD for information on inequality and deprivation. According to the NCBAU, there were 'gaps in the statistical data', and in order to address these gaps the NBCAU: i) wrote out to over 500 groups, and ii) held focus groups with communities.

b. The collection of data on inequality has been a long process including: the Dunlop Report, the MacKenzie Report, and included the work of the Advisory Panel

c. It was not the appropriate stage of the regeneration process to identify groups to target through employment proposals:

"The Draft Masterplan actually makes it clear that there's a need to provide training and employment opportunities for local people. Now the detail of that, of trying to address those at most at need, is then when we start to implement the Masterplan. So that's a very relevant point [nb. this answer was provided in response to question by the Residents' Jury asking how the statistics in the Draft EQIA relate to the proposals in the Masterplan] but its probably further down the line." (emphasis added)

3. **Equality Commission's 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment'**
Schedule 9, para 4 (3) of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) states that equality schemes must conform with the Equality Commission's Guide to the Statutory Duties, which outlines the mandatory aspects of the legislation for public bodies.

Annex 1, para 2.1 is quite clear in terms of what public bodies should do when there is insufficient data available on inequalities:

- *"Identify gaps in available information for equality categories and where more detailed data are needed take steps in order to have the optimum information on which to consult and base subsequent decisions;*

- *If necessary, commission new data (qualitative or quantitative). As outlined above co-operation within and between sectors should be considered…"*

Despite openly stating that there were "gaps in statistical data", it does not appear that the Department for Social Development did not take any steps to commission new data. It is the Jury's opinion that this would be essential in order to have "optimum information" on which to decide how £231 million would be spent by a public authority.

4. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
Through contact with the NISRA (19th January 2009), the Residents Jury were able to identify some statistics readily available in relation to Section 75 groups that were not included in the Draft EQIA:

- New Deal 25+ (2007) – Age (North Belfast Assembly Area)
- Higher Education Enrolments (2006/07) – Age and Gender (Across North Belfast Wards)
- Disability Living Allowance Recipients (2007) – Age and Gender (Across North Belfast Wards)
- Income Support Claimants (2007) – Age, Gender, Disability Status, with/without Dependents, martial status (Across North Belfast Wards)

Therefore, even without having to commission further research, or instruct statutory agencies or government departments to present data in certain fashions, there were statistics on inequality and employment, health, and education readily available through the internet. Despite this availability, these were not used in the Draft EQIA by the Department for Social Development.

5. Shankill Job Assist Centre and the Ashton Employment Club
The Residents Jury were aware that local community organisations, specifically those providing services, collected information on residents in relation to employment and health. In order to see what type of information was available from these sources and which could be of use to an EQIA, the Jury contacted the

Shankill Job Assist Centre and the Ashton Employment Club. The Jury found that these organisations collected information on the profile of service users' (such as age, gender, etc) which is submitted to the Department for Employment and Learning and could be gathered to assist in identifying inequalities between the named groups under the legislation.

Furthermore the Jury is aware that an abundance of information is collected when people fill in Jobs Seekers Allowance claims, housing benefit, etc. This information, specifically about north Belfast, should be extracted in order to name vulnerable groups in our community. While some of this data may not be available at Super Output Area level due to data protection, it should be available at Ward level. If we as a Jury can access this information through Freedom of Information requests, then this information should be sought and collected by the DSD as an essential part of this £231 million project.

6. The Dunlop Report and work of the Girdwood Advisory Panel

The NBCAU during our Jury session (13th January 2009) stated that the Dunlop Report and work of the Advisory Panel had assisted in gathering information to identify vulnerable groups. Having analysed these documents, the Residents' Jury is only able to locate Socio-Economic Profiles of the North Belfast Constituency. While Socio-Economic Profiles are a useful part of an EQIA, they do not dig deep enough to indentify inequalities between groups, and this is precisely the purpose of an EQIA. Instead they tend to take a 'catch all' approach, and do not properly analyse which specific groups are experiencing inequality in our community. It is our understanding the EQIAs were brought into law precisely because this approach has not allowed groups in need of equality to be targeted.

7. Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents Jury (28th May 2008)

The Jury found it extremely alarming that the NBCAU during the Evidence Collecting session stated, in relation to identifying vulnerable groups in relation to employment, that the EQIA stage was not the appropriate stage of regeneration process to name groups who must be targeted. Rather the NBCAU stated that this is something which should be considered during the tender stage for construction.

It was helpful that the NBCAU have stated that they are aware of the failings of the Gasworks site, in particular failings around employment, however they do not seem to have addressed this in their current approach. As Joe McNeely (Central Baltimore Partnership) said at the Residents' Jury:

"We have learned over the years that a plan is not a worthy tool unless it has its implementation plan already in place and that includes concrete steps for achieving the human rights and social objectives. It is not enough to make general references to the deprivation of the community, there have to be specific mechanisms and time tables spelled out…" (p.54)

"Finally, what are the goals? What are the indicators that will be used to find out if we've achieved them? We can collect some baseline information right now but if it's not going to be these statistics then what are they? While, as Tim said [Tim Losty – Director of NBCAU], the statistics change over time, there needs to be some agreement about which set of cards we're playing with at the beginning so we know where the change went. (p.69)

NBCAU's statement about the chronology of identifying vulnerable groups is factually incorrect. The EQIA is precisely supposed to identify vulnerable groups.

APPENDIX THREE

A2. Have the experiences of vulnerable groups living with deprivation and inequality been collected?

As the DSD did not meet indicator A1, then fulfilling A2 is impossible. The identification of groups experiencing inequality is a necessary pre-requisite to engaging with them.

1. Equality Commission's 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment'
Annex 1, para 2.1 of the Guide states:

"Relevant, reliable and up-to-date information is essential. Statistics alone do not provide reasons or explanations for differences. Public authorities must therefore institute a system of information gathering across all nine equality categories to supplement available statistical and qualitative research."

2. Freedom of Information request to the DSD revealing details of all focus groups and meetings which took place in the community regarding the Draft EQIA
The methodology used by the DSD to engage with members of the communities, and community workers, was about verifying the current proposals in the Draft Masterplan. These proposals were developed in the absence of looking at any inequalities. This was therefore not about the experiences of vulnerable groups in our community with a view to developing targeted proposals, but about seeing if the proposals would 'do any harm' to our community.

This difference between these approaches was outlined to the NBCAU in advance of the 'focus groups' being carried out in the community during a meeting with the PPR Project on 8th August 2008. A 'focus group' format was presented to the Director of the NBCAU as a method of fulfilling statutory requirements, however this was turned down. Subsequently community groups, in conjunction with PPR Project, carried out eight focus groups across north Belfast using the community developed methodology which sought to extract qualitative evidence from residents to supplement and help understand statistical data.

3. **Draft EQIA submissions from the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Participation and the Practice of Rights Project, Lower Shankill Community Association, Cliftonville Antrim Road CEP, Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, Brucevale Residents, North Belfast Interface Network, Community Relations Council, North Belfast Partnership Board**

The Residents Jury also found alarming information when reading the Lower Shankill Community Association's response to the Draft EQIA, which would lead us to question the quality of the 'focus groups' carried out by the DSD:

"On page 53, we have been listed in the "formal consultation" section as having held a focus group on the Draft EQIA. This is not the case. We held an informal meeting with the North Belfast Community Action Unit at the Crumlin Road Gaol at which we discussed some issues, but this was not seen by us and should not be considered a focus group. At the meeting we explained the importance of consulting with local residents from the Lower Shankill."

And further:

"We submitted a copy of the Lower Shankill Community Audit (July 2006) as part of the initial consultation for the Draft EQIA. This was designed to provide additional information about our area that might not be available from other, official sources as well as to provide context on some of the issues in the Lower Shankill. It also makes recommendations based on residents' views for how to ensure the problems around

education, health and employment could be solved. This information does not seem to have been reflected at all in the content of the Draft EQIA."

4. Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol

The Jury, when analysing the Draft EQIA and the Focus Group sessions received through Freedom of Information, also found selective use of evidence provided by groups. For example the Draft Masterplan makes proposals for high rise housing. The Draft EQIA cites a particular focus group with youth (under 16) as saying:

"A cross-community focus group of young people (under 16) expressed the view that residential accommodation was important and that apartments would be preferable to houses." (p.42)

Yet the submission by community organisations and PPR based on focus groups with the following organisations: Women United, Girdwood Residents Jury Group (Disability), Brucevale residents, Manor Street, Ardoyne residents, CARCEP Youth Group, New Lodge residents, and Silver Threads, stated:

"The suitability of the housing in the areas was also an important issue – the Silver Threads group pointed out that high rise flats were unsuitable for families and the elderly. New Lodge group noted that high rise living adversely impacts vulnerable groups, and those with mental illness, as it compounds isolation and loneliness. New Lodge also noted that high rise accommodation has not proven suitable for families with children."

These two groups – in particular the New Lodge residents – were particularly important as the Draft EQIA identified catholics and nationalists as experiencing inequality by being disproportionately represented on the social housing waiting list. Yet the DSD have omitted their experience of social housing high rise from consideration of available data and research. It is extremely concerning that high rise development is a proposal included in the Draft Masterplan without any analysis of the impact of this on residents, or suggestions of alternatives which could better promote equality.

Bruceale Residents response to the Draft EQIA outlined this point:

"The final EQIA needs to provide details of how housing inequality will be reduced and how equality of opportunity will be promoted between persons with dependants and persons without. We believe that this should include a breakdown for the construction of a targeted number of 2, 3, 4 bedroom homes for small and large families. These homes need to be provided as social housing units as the provision of private housing will not reduce these inequalities and as the EQIA already demonstrates in detail, existing inequality in housing will increase"

This selective citation of evidence which supported existing proposals in the Draft Masterplan and ignores the experiences of those who have actually experienced high rise accommodation again calls into question the weight given to particular evidence.

APPENDIX FOUR

A3. Were identified vulnerable groups involved in naming and prioritising the issues which are most important to them?

As the DSD did not meet A1 or A2, then meeting A3 is impossible as vulnerable groups, other than catholics or nationalists on the social housing waiting list, have not been identified in the Draft EQIA. However, residents were involved in direct meetings with the NBCAU during the EQIA process through the focus groups.

1. The Draft Masterplan for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol
The only engagement between the consultants who drew up the proposals in the Draft Masterplan and potential vulnerable groups were during official information and consultation sessions held across communities during the Masterplan development phase. This was not meaningful engagement with a view to establishing a process of ensuring social and economic inequalities were addressed and rights progressed, rather they were predominately 'report back' and 'information' sessions for residents.

2. Freedom of Information request to the DSD revealing details of all focus groups and meetings which took place in the community regarding the Draft EQIA;
3. The Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol
As described in both A1 and A2, the methodology used by the DSD to carry out EQIA focus groups did not include opportunities for groups experiencing inequality to prioritise issues they wanted to see addressed in the regeneration in a meaningful way. Indeed, where the DSD did actually identify an inequality – *ie* social housing for catholics and nationalists – it does not seem that any specific attempt was made to engage residents on the social housing waiting list to explore what would be required in terms of housing type. In contrast, as displayed in the previous section, their priorities were submitted to the DSD during the EQIA consultation but omitted from the Draft EQIA.

4. Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents' Jury (28th May 2008)
During the Residents Jury event, the Jury heard evidence from international regeneration experts on the necessity of meaningful resident participation in the design, delivery and evaluation stages of regeneration process. Ron Shiffman, and urban planner and founder of the Pratt Centre for Community Development (NY, USA) stated the importance of fulfilling this indicator:

"Let's remember that there isn't an architect or a planner that knows your community and your needs better than you know them, and what you need to do is make sure that when working with them that it is a two way educational process. They learn from you. You learn from them." (p.50)

This constructive dialogue and partnership cannot be progressed if a key partner in the regeneration process has effectively been excluded from prioiristing their issues.

5. Draft EQIA submissions from the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Participation and the Practice of Rights Project, Lower Shankill Community Association, Cliftonville Antrim Road CEP, Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, Brucevale Residents, North Belfast Interface Network, Community Relations Council, North Belfast Partnership Board

An instance of where a community organiation provided first hand evidence of the issues affecting vulnerable groups was in the Lower Shankill Community Association response to the Draft EQIA. However, they stated:

"We submitted a copy of the Lower Shankill Community Audit (July 2006) as part of the initial consultation for the Draft EQIA. This was designed to provide additional information about our area that might not be available from other, official sources as well as to provide context on some of the issues in the Lower Shankill. It also makes recommendations based on residents' views for how to ensure the problems around

education, health and employment could be solved. This information does not seem to have been reflected at all in the content of the Draft EQIA."

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APPENDIX FIVE

A4. Is the information on inequality and deprivation clear, accessible and easily understood in the EQIA documents and in the consultation process?

The Residents Jury found the information presented in the Draft EQIA, and the format in which information was presented, to be extremely complex and difficult for residents not versed in the EQIA process to understand and follow.

1. **Equality Commission's 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment'**
   - *"the accessibility of the language and the format of information must be considered to ensure that there are no barriers to the consultation process." Section 4 para 2 (c)*

Furthermore:

"5.13 Written papers which are made available to consultees should:
- *Use plain language and be jargon-free;*
- *Convey specialist information in as simple a format as possible. For example, there will be occasions when documents need to include fairly detailed statistics or very specialised information. It is crucial that such material is translated into language which non-experts can understand;*
- *Include an executive summary;"*

The Jury found that none of these were done in the Draft EQIA.

APPENDIX SIX

A5. Were residents from identified vulnerable groups involved in collecting and analysing the information during the EQIA process?

Again, without identification of vulnerable groups (A1), this indicator is impossible to fulfill.

The NBCAU and DSD were solely responsible for collecting and analyzing information during the EQIA process. While community groups along with the PPR Project held a eight focus groups with residents, the official analysis of this information, and its subsequent bearing on any of the regeneration proposals, were left entirely to the DSD.

1. Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents Jury (28th May 2008)

The importance of residents being involved in the collection and analysis of information on deprivation and inequality was highlighted by Ron Shiffman at the Residents' Jury event who, drawing on international best practice, stated:

"Reason is dependent on a rational, systemic analysis – a way of looking at things, looking at the charts, looking at the data and beginning to collect that data. But participation becomes crucial because what that data means is different to different people. How you interpret that data and what it really means comes out of a dialogue that engages people in the long run. Democracy is critically dependent on the participation of the people and the two are synergistic, they interrelate and they become really important." (p.35)

"The result out of this effort is a much more informed and engaged civil society where process is as important, if not more important than the outcome because the process here often leads to what really becomes the development and the building of community." (.36)

Joe McNeely, Director of the Central Baltimore Partnership (Maryland, USA) elaborated on the methodology required:

"We observe and collect data. We reflect on and analyse that data. The community alone needs an opportunity to analyse that data and then there needs to be a common analysis and reflection with other partners." (p.54)

2. Equality Commission's 'Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment'

The Residents' Jury found that this participatory approach is compliant with Section 75 guidance:

Annex 1, para 2.1 of the Guide states:

"Relevant, reliable and up-to-date information is essential. Statistics alone do not provide reasons or explanations for differences. Public authorities must therefore institute a system of information gathering across all nine equality categories to supplement available statistical and qualitative research."

Furthermore the same section of the Guidance instructs public bodies to:

"Use qualitative or evaluative research or information gathered by government and bodies such as voluntary, community and trade union organizations."

APPENDIX SEVEN

A6. Was there training and assistance resourced and made accessible by government to enable vulnerable groups to provide, collect and analyse information during the EQIA process?

'Vulnerable' residents experiencing inequality were not identified (A1), and residents were not involved in the collection or analyzing of information which would impact the regeneration proposals (A5). Therefore, training and assistance was not offered, nevermind being resourced.

1. Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents Jury (28th May 2008)
Joe McNeely emphasized the importance of this role for residents:

"capacity building is crucial to participating in implementing and in accountability. These are skills that are not automatic for any of the parties, so we need the resources, time and the commitment at each stage to build the capacity of all of the partners. What are those particular skills? We need to call on those who want to take the process forward to make the investment in that kind of capacity building." (p.55)

Furthermore, Mr McNeely went on to cite a practical example of where this approach had proven successful and a best practice model:

"In Oakland, California they trained community residents to be expert interviewers of people in the community. They trained the same people to bring the tapes back from those interviews and to be the expert 'de-briefers' of the data. They then worked with people at the University on the analysis of the community, which was producing a highly textured analysis of it's own community. The side effect of that was all of those interviewers became community leaders around the issues that they had interviewed on and they were able to get an implementation of the plan, resources for self organised solutions to problems that people had identified in the process that built the capacity of people." (p.57)

Tim Losty, Director of the NBCAU, when referring to the importance of capacity building and community engagement stated that:

" …[during the] pre-concept stage, six public meetings and a series of individual meetings took place. We also provided briefings with our colleagues in the community empowerment partnerships. I think Joe [McNeely] was talking about building capacity in the community and that's what we have tried to do with the 13 CEP's over the last number of years." (p.66)

The Residents' Jury feel it is important to note that the CEPs were specifically funded as an intervention programme in north Belfast to assist in addressing social and economic need and deal with a vast array of dedicated programmes much broader than the Girdwood regeneration. There was no specific intervention to educate and train local residents to be meaningful participants in the design, delivery or evaluation stages of the Girdwood regeneration.

APPENDIX EIGHT

A7. Is the evidence regarding local deprivation and inequality being used by government to form proposals?

1. Evidence Provided at the Girdwood Residents Jury (28th May 2008)
Virginia Bras Gomes, Portuguese member of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights emphasised that for regenerations to be evaluated effectively, the link between inequality and regeneration proposals was essential:

"In order to ascertain how successful the proposals would be at targeting inequalities and deprivation in the area, they would have to be subject to an ongoing assessment on the part of the residents to monitor compliance with qualitative and quantitative targets." (p.29)

Furthermore, Joe McNeely stressed that the inclusion of both inequality and deprivation statistics in any Masterplan which are targeted through detailed proposals is also essential:

"We have learned over the years that a plan is not a worthy tool unless it has its implementation plan already in place and that includes the concrete steps for achieving the human rights and social objectives. It is not enough to make general references to the deprivation of the community, there have to be specific mechanisms and time tables spelled out, which include piecing where the indicators are going to be in the future." (p.54)

2. **The Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol;**
3. The Draft Masterplan for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol
Both the Masterplan and the Draft Equality Impact Assessment for Girdwood Barracks and Crumlin Road Gaol omit detailed analysis of inequality and deprivation, and subsequent targeted proposals to address the same.

REAL JOBS NOW

Factsheet

What is REAL JOBS NOW?

On 6th January 2014, Belfast City Council passed the **REAL JOBS NOW** motion with significant cross party support. It commits Belfast City Council to using its significant annual £40 million procurement budget to realise improved outcomes for communities by ringfencing fully paid jobs and apprenticeships for the long term unemployed.

The motion states:

> *"This Council recognises the increasing social and economic hardship experienced by people in our communities as a result of growing unemployment and cuts to welfare benefits. The Council accepts that it has a duty to use the powers available to it (including but not limited to planning, regulation and procurement powers), to generate positive outcomes for the most marginalised in our communities and hereby commits to including at every available opportunity a 'Real Jobs' clause in contracts tendered by the Council to procure goods, services and capital works. The 'Real Jobs' clause will guarantee ring fenced, fully paid jobs and apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed (12+ months)."*

The campaign for REAL JOBS NOW was led by a group of unemployed people from across the City known as the **Right to Work; Right to Welfare (R2W) Group**[1] which is supported in its work by human rights organisation the **Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR)**[2]. Over 1500 people from across Belfast, including over 50 community and voluntary organisations supported the campaign calling on Council to pass and implement REAL JOBS NOW social clauses. The campaign also received support from the (now former) United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Ms Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona who commented;

> *"The important work being done by the Right to Work: Right to Welfare Group in Belfast, Northern Ireland to hold the government accountable ... is crucial and should be praised as a promising practice to be followed."*[3]

Belfast City Council is currently taking forward proposals to implement the REAL JOBS NOW social clause into Council policy. The R2W Group will be monitoring this process to ensure that meaningful implementation delivers the outcomes as envisaged by the motion and as required by communities.

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[1] For further information on the R2W Group, please see http://pprproject.org/right-to-work-right-to-welfare

[2] The Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR) organisation was established in 2006 by internationally renowned trade unionist and human rights activist Inez McCormack. PPR supports disadvantaged groups in Northern Ireland (NI) to make their socio-economic rights real and assert their right to participate in government decisions which affect their lives. PPR enables groups to challenge and change current government decision making practices which exclude them, and which lead to poor service delivery, entrenched inequalities and ineffective use of public money. Please see www.pprproject.org

[3] To view the full message of support, please see http://pprproject.org/sites/default/files/Message%20of%20Support%20for%20Right%20to%20Work_M_Sepulveda%2015%20July%202013.pdf

Common Questions about REAL JOBS NOW answered:

Is it legal?

Yes. The ring-fencing of jobs for the long-term unemployed is permissible through both national and European legislation.

Articles 55 and 75 of **The Fair Employment and Treatment Order (1998**) allows all employers to make it a requirement that when filling a vacancy that applicants who have not been in employment for a specified period of time are treated more favourably than those who are in employment or have not been in employment for a shorter period of time. This means that reserving specific vacancies for unemployed persons or only recruiting from individuals who have not been in employment for a specified period is permissible under this legislation.

Section 75 of the **Northern Ireland Act (1998)** makes it an obligation for public authorities to pay due regard to the promotion of equality among the nine named groups in the legislation when carrying out all of their functions. This includes recruitment processes, procurement procedures, planning powers and all other responsibilities which Belfast City Council exercise.

The Local Government Best Value (Exclusion of Non Commercial Considerations) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012 removed restrictions on councils in relation to their public supply or work contracts which were previously in place under Article 19(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1992. Guidance issued with the legislation by the Department of the Environment (Local Government Circular NO.19/2012) encourages Councils to include social clauses that represent Best Value.

In terms of European Procurement Case Law, the ***Beentjes*** **(Gebroeders Beentjes B.V. v The State (Netherlands) (C31/87))** found that a contract condition that the Contractor must employ long-term unemployed persons can be compatible with the rules, so long as general EU Treaty principles are adhered to.

Has it been done before?

Using procurement expenditure to employ the unemployed has been done before in the public sector.

In **2003 the Department of Finance and Personnel commenced a cross- Departmental pilot project on utilising the unemployed in public sector procurement**.

Companies bidding for 15 public sector construction and service contracts had to submit employment plans outlining how they intended to employ the unemployed in work on the contract, as well as any previous experience doing this type of work. Importantly, this contractual obligation to employ the unemployed also applied to any work carried out by sub-contractors on the contract. The employment plan also determined that if two bids were judged to be equal then whichever had the better employment plan would get the tender.

During a two-year period, 51 people commenced employment on various contracts involved in the pilot project, and as of June 2005, 46 were still in employment i.e. two years after the scheme commenced there was a 90% employment retention rate . The break down shows that 32 people were employed in the service sector and 19 in the construction sector. The job titles of people employed include a site supervisor, HGV drivers, a head chef and general labour operatives.

The NI Pilot project was compared with three similar UK projects, namely the Fusion 21 Project in Merseyside, the Community Benefits Pathfinder Project in Wales and Community Benefits in Procurement Programme in Scotland. Whilst 34 people had been employed on the Welsh Pathfinder project up to July 2005, 51 from the target group have been employed on the NI Project. The overall cost per job created on the NI Pilot project was one person employed for every £900,000 spend, although this figure could more accurately be calculated at £610,000[4]. This is less than half the cost of the much larger Fusion 21 Project in Merseyside (£1.5m spend per person employed).

The evaluation noted positive feedback from contractors:

"At the end of the evaluation period questionnaires were distributed to all the winning contractors and the client contract managers. The return rate of the survey was excellent with 63% of contractor questionnaires returned and an impressive 93% (14 out of 15) client questionnaires returned. Key results from the survey showed that on the contractor side 90% of respondents believed that the Pilot did not lead to an increase in direct costs while on the client side over 64% considered that the Pilot did not result in any significant increase in workload."

The outcomes that were anticipated from the Pilot included:

- *reduced unemployment and social welfare payments:* while the pool of participants was too small to generate substantial impacts in terms of reduced social welfare payments, the Pilot project demonstrated that with some adjustments, roll-out across the full range of public procurement projects could make a significant impact to reducing unemployment and social welfare payments.
- *ensuring that the supply market is more responsive to the government's goals:* whilst contractors' responses have been varied, dependent mainly on the nature of the contract, there is evidence from both the interviews and the survey that contractors are supportive of government goals in relation to using public procurement to achieve social goals
- *improving the future career prospects for employees:* all those employed from the target group, including those who have left employment, will have gained confidence and experience as a result of their period of employment. This should therefore enhance their prospects of sustainable employment in the future
- *there have been no EU challenges:* the Pilot project was based upon a cautious interpretation of the public procurement rules then in place, and was designed to ensure minimal risk of challenge by contractors, or intervention by the EU Commission. Having proved that the Pilot Project is compliant with EU rules, and with clients and contractors more experienced in applying the procedures, the Pilot may be extended more widely without risk of challenge, so long as the procedures are applied correctly

In 2012, the **Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure** utilised in **£15m expenditure on Ravenhill Rugby** stadium to create 7 fully paid jobs and 4 fully paid apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed (12+ months). Work on this project has been completed, however no

[4] "It should also be pointed out that the 51 people in NI were employed on only 10 of the contracts that started during the evaluation period. Four of the five contracts in which no one from the target group was employed had procedural problems which effectively ruled out the employment of anybody from the target group. The fifth relied mainly on specialist subcontractors. If these contracts were excluded from the assessment the cost per job is reduced to approximately one job per £610,000 spend."

evaluation has been carried out to date. Nevertheless, the relevant contract language and clauses required to implement these constructive measures are available. It is also our understanding that DCAL were seeking to enhance the basic conditions in the Ravenhill contracts through both the Windsor Park and Casement Stadia projects.

Doesn't Belfast City Council provide jobs for the long-term unemployed through its procurement budget?

Belfast City Council, currently provides social clauses in procurement contracts which provide Steps to Work placements for unemployed people in projects tendered by the Council.[5] However, research carried out across Belfast by the Right to Work: Right to Welfare Group in March 2013 indicates that only 5% of people actually got a job after participating in the Steps to Work scheme. DEL official statistics also indicate that across NI only 25% of those on the scheme find employment. It is clear that Steps to Work is not a viable option for anyone who is serious about tackling unemployment.

It is within both the powers and the obligations of the Council to aim for better.

As displayed from the above examples, much more could be done to provide real, fully paid jobs and apprenticeships for the long-term unemployed.

On Friday 3rd May 2013, at the invitation of the Lower Shankill Community Association and Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum, PPR delivered a presentation on what could be achieved through procurement contracts in relation to the proposed Girdwood Hub. In attendance were Belfast City Council officials including officials from the Procurement Department. Belfast City Council officials suggested that the approach proposed by PPR – which involved the ring-fenced, fully paid employment and apprenticeships for the long term unemployed (12+ months) was possible.

From paperwork provided following this meeting, it is apparent that, on this occasion, Belfast City Council officials did not opt for the approach recommended by PPR and instead opted for the normal Steps to Work placements. For the Council to move to an approach capable of realising innovative, achievable and necessary outcomes for Belfast, the political will of Belfast City Councillors will be necessary.

[5] http://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MID=9957#AI12856

Playboard Northern Ireland

Karen Jardine
Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister
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10 October 2014

RE: PlayBoard NI Response into Building a United Community

PlayBoard is an independent charity and the lead organisation for the development and promotion of children and young people's play in Northern Ireland. Since our establishment in 1985, PlayBoard has been committed to supporting the child's right to play through a combination of: service delivery, service development; campaigning, lobbying; awareness raising and working in partnership with others to put play on the agenda of policy makers and resource providers. The organisation takes great pride in promoting best practice in Play, Playwork and play based School Age Childcare services.

PlayBoard's mission is to drive the play agenda, ensuring that at every level of decision making across society, the child's right to play is not only recognised but is made a reality within the lives of children, young people, families and communities. Children and young people's views, aspirations and perceptions of themselves and the environment in which they live, are at the heart of PlayBoard's work. Our vision is of a society where the right to play is realised.

We welcome this opportunity to contribute to the Inquiry into Building a United Community. As an organisation we are fully supportive of the Executive's commitment to Building a United Community. We believe that play, and playwork in particular has a critical role in bringing children together through their natural and shared drive to play; something which is unfortunately all too often overlooked and underutilised by educational and local government establishments.

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Company Limited by Guarantee No. NI30225 - Inland Revenue Charity Number XR86639

Whilst PlayBoard's primary organisational focus is not on the area of community relations, our work over the past 30 years has included a considerable body of work aimed at using play as a positive vehicle for bringing communities together. In this submission we have focused on providing examples of how play-based programmes can work in practice to bring children together. We would urge that cognisance be given to the untapped potential of play to become one of the central lynchpins that attracts children, teachers and crucially parents to the idea of sharing services and spaces across and between communities.

Our experience in the practice of Building a United Community in schools, school age childcare sector and communities

Young children living in divided societies like Northern Ireland are inclined to develop particular cultural dispositions or habits reflective of their own ethnic group. These dispositions often manifest in relation to young children's preferences towards their own community's cultural events, symbols and practices. Children want to be with others who are of 'their own kind' and share their 'in-group preferences'. As a result they may develop negative dispositions towards those who are different from themselves and form 'out-group prejudices'.[1]

Schools: Over the past two years PlayBoard has piloted and developed the implementation of our 'Spaces to Be' programme within the wider Contested Spaces programme. This pilot programme is jointly funded by OFMDFM and Atlantic Philanthropies and uses play to facilitate participating schools to address community and cultural barriers enabling respect for difference and inclusion of others within the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding strand of the statutory curriculum.

The 'Spaces to Be' programme is premised on PlayBoard's 'Spaces to Be – Mapping Identity and Belonging toolkit', which was developed by PlayBoard through funding provided by Peace III. The resource builds on PlayBoard's many years of playwork and peace building experience, and practice of working with children, young people and communities across Northern Ireland. The toolkit is a practice based resource, which was developed with and for children and young people, to support them to explore issues of identity and belonging through a play based methodology.

[1] Connolly, P. (2009). *Developing Programmes to Promote Ethnic Diversity in Early Childhood: Lessons from Northern Ireland. Working Papers in Early Childhood Development, Number 52.* Bernard van Leer Foundation. PO Box 82334, 2508 EH, The Hague, The Netherlands.

Using a play methodology, the 'Spaces to Be' programme seeks to promote and improve the relationships between and across an interface/contested space communities. In its current incarnation, through a range of play-based activities, P5, P6 and P7 pupils from schools come together to understand and respect difference relating to religion, culture, gender and disability. The programme is underpinned by the Playwork Principles, which puts children at the centre of their play experience. Playwork enables children to be free to: choose, personally direct and be intrinsically motivated, to play. Children determine and control the content and intent of their play, follow their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way and for their own reasons.

The aim of the 'Spaces to Be' programme is to enhance children's capacity for positive development by giving them access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities. Through contact with the 'out-group' they become more inclined to develop mutual respect for the other group's cultural events, symbols and practices. This is achieved by using practical and playful exercises that support the school curriculum, and encourage children and young people to explore their understanding of difference. Moreover, the toolkit helps to promote the creation of innovative shared space and peace building and reconciliation through play.

As an organisation we are under no illusion that implementing a play programme within a school setting is challenging; and that implementing a contact based play intervention is even more challenging. However, it is our firm belief that the challenges are outweighed by both the innovative nature of play as a mechanism for contact and the potential impact it has to bring about better intergroup relations for future generations. We have learned through our experience of 'Spaces to Be' that Building a United Community is a journey that requires buy-in from schools, principals, teachers and parents who need to be 'empowered' to engage in a process that allows them to identify and confront problems and overcome barriers.

School Age Childcare: PlayBoard is also passionate about leading the development of the School Age Childcare sector, a sector which provides childcare and age appropriate play opportunities for children aged between 4 and 14 years. School Age Childcare settings provide a caring and safe environment, offering a range of active and stimulating play activities for children.

Crucially, due to the cross-community nature of most settings, School Age Childcare providers have the ability to provide for many children an opportunity to meet with, interact and engage with children from another community or cultural background on an almost daily basis. Given the largely segregated

nature of the education system the importance of School Age Childcare provision in helping to build a united community should not be underestimated.

The Executive recently launched 'Bright Start', the first stage of the Northern Ireland childcare strategy and this has seen the beginning of a much needed investment in the development and growth of School Age Childcare capacity across Northern Ireland. It is critical that this investment is protected and that the impact of providers in supporting cross-community contact is acknowledged by government.

Community: In addition to the work required within schools and the school age childcare sector, PlayBoard firmly believes that the development of shared spaces within communities is critical to building a shared future. It is our experience, that play and play areas can offer an excellent opportunity to initiate a process of changing societal perceptions of the 'other group' for both children and adults alike.

As PlayBoard's very successful CAN Peace III Partnership funded, Positive Play Programme 'CAN Play' demonstrated free-play practice can lead to the more effective utilisation of shared spaces and services across community boundaries. The impact of 'CAN Play' exceeded all expectations particularly in terms of developing play based opportunities for cross-community contact between children and adults, and in terms of using free play as a means of creating shared spaces which met the play needs of children whilst encouraging wider social and community interaction.

Our experience of 'CAN Play' highlights the critical importance of building in sustainability from the outset. In particular there is a need to acknowledge and recognise that Playworkers or trained volunteers capable of overseeing community-led play initiatives are critical to long term sustainability.

Concluding Comments

As a relatively new post-conflict society Northern Ireland has made progress, however for many children – know or known to them - it remains a divided society. At the heart of much of the division is the segregated schooling system, which enables the status quo of children having little or no contact with the other group, to remain. This leads us to strongly advocate that all future work charged within the realm of Building a United Community focuses on the need to promote respect for difference and inclusion of others from birth, through the early years, middle childhood and adolescence. We believe play is an excellent mechanism to make serious inroads into achieving a shared future of substance.

Furthermore, given the unique ability of play to bring children and young people together through a common, natural drive we would strongly advocate that the

Together Building a United Community Strategy recognises the importance of play within the school curriculum, school playground, school estate, the wider school age childcare sector and crucially within communities. PlayBoard cannot reiterate strongly enough the important role that we believe play has in paving the way for enabling 'sharing' whether that is within the confines of educational settings or community spaces.

Classroom settings offer an ideal setting for much of this work but outside of the 'formal' school day there are considerable benefits to be accrued from, for example shared school aged childcare within the workings of OFMDFM's Bright Start Strategy. Also with the advent of Community Planning there is an excellent opportunity to develop shared spaces to encourage community integration and to remove both physical and perceived interface barriers that divide our society.

We would urge that play is considered to be a priority for inclusion within any proposals relating to Building a United Community. We are not suggesting that play areas should be state of the art but rather they are so appealing to the local population that the utilisation of the space cannot be resisted. An example might be the St Kilda Adventure Playground, Melbourne or the BBC clip on playwork in action from Wrexham.

There is little doubt that play is of considerable importance to childhoods and it is our hope that it can be effectively harnessed through this inititive and others to build a shared future for the coming generations.

Yours sincerely,

_____
Jacqueline O'Loughlin
Chief Executive Officer

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Police Service of Northern Ireland
7th OCTOBER 2014

Response to the Inquiry on
Together: Building a United Community

The PSNI welcomes the delivery of a Community Cohesion Strategy for Northern Ireland in the form of Together: Building a United Community. We note the objective of Departments working together to ensure that outcomes are delivered on the ground.

We welcome the commitment to creating a new, united, reconciled and shared society. [1]

The PSNI welcomes the proposal for the establishment of an independent Equality and Good Relations Commission. The statutory basis of the commission and its role in providing advice to government alongside challenge is welcomed. It is important that in giving the Equality Commission a Good Relations function that we define what Good Relations are clearly in that statute.

In TBUC it states that "it is not intended to replace or subsume our work on racial equality and good relations. Rather it will compliment and provide the co-ordinated framework for aspects of its delivery"[2]. It is however important that the overall strategy highlights the linkage between the various strategies and that its references to key outcomes are not just focused on the issues related to sectarianism but all areas of good relations.

PSNI Welcome the objective of achieving a consensus around the definition of sectarianism for the draft legislation for the Equality and Good Relations Commission. It would be important that this definition is clear in law to allow for its potential use in the future were the Assembly to consider amending the Criminal Justice (No 2) Northern Ireland Order 2004[3] to include sectarianism

[1] Paragraph 1.9 - TBUC
[2] Paragraph 1.30 - TBUC
[3] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2004/1991/contents

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in the ambit of enhanced sentencing for offences aggravated by hate or hostility.

PSNI Welcome the highlighting of the role of PCSPs and DPCSPs in delivering safer, shared and confident communities at local level.[4] This strategy will need to inform the work of the new District Councils under Community Planning provisions to address underlying community issues on a partnership basis to deliver locally the strategic outcomes. This will be especially important if the objective of removal of interface barriers is to be achieved.

While TBUC noted the decrease in hate crime at the time of publication we would highlight the increase in Hate Crime and incidents that has emerged over the past 12 months. The significant increase in hate crime noted both in terms of race hate and sectarian offences emphasises the warning in paragraph 4.10 that we must not be complacent on this issue.

The PSNI has provided a response separately on the consultation on the good relations indicators.

[4] Para 3.24 TBUC

Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Response to the OFMDFM Committee Inquiry on Together: Building a United Community – October 2014

1. As the Church and Society Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, we are grateful for the opportunity to offer this relatively brief paper to the Committee, along with the offer to appear before you to expand on the points raised in this paper and on other issues in TBUC.

2. There is much in TBUC that is worthy of real commendation, In particular we note the emphasis on young people; the development of 10 shared educational campuses and the emphasis on raising the hopes and opportunities for NEETS, along with the aspiration to remove the physical barriers in interface areas over a ten year period.

3. We are also pleased with the explicit recognition in the TBUC Strategy of the huge importance of a forward looking cohesive society.

'The economic, political, cultural and social changes that have been taking place highlight that there is much for us all to be collectively proud of as a society. However, we know that this progress can only continue within the context of a united community. We cannot build a modern, well-equipped society in the absence of good relations, equality of opportunity and reconciliation. This Strategy sets out a vision for the kind of society we want to see and outlines the strategic framework that will shape action in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance.'

This restatement of key aims from the Belfast Agreement in 1998 is very welcome: There it was agreed that *:*

'we make a fresh start in which we firmly dedicate ourselves to the achievement of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual trust and to the protection and vindication of the human rights of all.'

4. As a church-based submission to your Committee we will confine ourselves at this juncture to offering comment from a macro and longer term perspective.

5. We invite the Committee to explore the implications of the Strategy NOT being implemented either in full or in part, for we sense that this might well turn out to be the case. What would the implications be for the economy of we were to remain a divided society? For political progress and development to a mature democracy? For the policing and justice systems? For communities already experiencing significant tension? For incoming communities and their ability to contribute to our future?

6. Community cohesion, reconciliation and trust over the 17 months since the publication of TBUC has scarcely been encouraging. The Haass talks floundered, and the Executive itself has been described recently by the First Minister as not fit for purpose. These are strong signals that the aims of TBUC are being constantly eroded and set aside in favour of other considerations.

7. This erosion is being accentuated by the very poor quality of public discourse, which seems increasingly to be fractious and ill tempered. For example, in May 2014 the Belfast Telegraph reported: ***Speaker William Hay has repeatedly warned MLAs against intemperate language … He has also warned some remarks had been made which would not be allowed in any other parliamentary democracy.***

8. It is our view that aggressive public discourse mentors and encourages community tensions, by 'normalising' such language and the underlying attitudes. We therefore invite the Committee to comment in its inquiry report on the need for quality in all public debate (whether in the Assembly or on the media) as an essential contribution to the building of a reconciled and cohesive united community.

9. We also have significant concerns about the traction of the strategy at local community level since its publication in May 2013. The strategy largely focussed on the work that government departments and local

councils after the RPA would undertake – and this was very welcome. However, there was minimal focus on the contribution expected from wider civic society (except in the area of sport). One of the results of that weakness is that there is minimal understanding of the strategy by the populace as a whole, and therefore little commitment or even sustained interest in it. This weakness needs to be rectified as soon as possible.

10. In this regard, we note that TBUC commits the Executive to an ambitious programme of action. This has been slow to materialise and as a church we are conscious of the frustrations of many community groups, which have been keen to contribute to the implementation of the strategy. The lack of action is undermining confidence in the initiative and implies a lack of commitment on the part of the Executive.

11. Finally, it seems inevitable that the increasing austerity will severely damage the delivery of the strategy… exemplified in this recent DEL Committee hearing:

Committee for Employment and Learning

October Monitoring Round 2014: DEL Officials - 1 October 2014

The Chairperson:
Did you not even feel that there would have been any Executive support for bidding for the £0·5 million cut from the Together: Building a United Community budget?

Mr McMurray: Not in the current climate of moneys available.

12. It seems beyond doubt that if the aims of TBUC are not central to the thinking, decisions and working of the Executive as austerity bites, that they will be marginalised in favour of other competing policy and departmental needs. If this happens, and that seems likely, then some of the commitments made in the Belfast Agreement will continue not to be achieved. This would be a very serious development, and the Committee might wish to comment on this in its report.

13. Finally, we would suggest that the Committee itself publishes an annual review of progress on TBUC to ensure that there is proper independent monitoring of the strategy over and above the stated ministerial oversight.

14. We reiterate our willingness to give oral evidence to the Committee if invited.

Submitted by Very Rev Dr Norman Hamilton
(on behalf of the Church and Society Committee of the Presbyterian Church)

9 October 2014

Rathfriland Resident

FAO:
Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister:

Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Community of Rathfriland, Co Down welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister's Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Rathfriland is a farming town with a population of around 3000, that population has increased 30% in the last 10 years due to its convenient location and great schools. The influx has been mainly Catholics taking the former 70% Protestants /30% catholic demographic to its current 50/50 mix.

Driving through Rathfriland in the summer months you would conclude that it is a staunchly Loyalist town (see attached images). The flags and emblems are in fact unwanted by a huge majority of the residents. A recent survey we conducted illustrated that over 95% of the respondents want a shared environment in the town. The community is taking steps to deal with this at grass roots level. We hope to negotiate a 'town agreement' on flags and emblems and bring the whole community together to re-image the town, promote tourism and attract investment.

Rathfriland Regeneration Group was established in 1994, with the aid of various grants it has delivered the towns recreation centre, integrated pre-school, affordable housing and retail units. But has always remained non political. The group's 28 members are also a 50/50 mix. Though the group have steered clear of political and religious issues they realise that the town would financially prosper if it had a tourist friendly, inclusive appearance.

- We as a community have created a website as a starting point on a re-imaging process www.rathfriland.info
- The Rathfriland Regeneration Group has applied for an Arts Council – Building Peace through the Arts grant. This grant will be used to facilitate workshops with all groups within the community. Using creativity as a way of hearing people's voices. Facilitators will go into the schools, the lodges and the churches and try to listen to everybody in an effort to bring about a town agreement on the flags and emblems.
- The Rathfriland Regeneration group along with local volunteers are building a community Peace garden. An artist will use the community creativity from the workshops as inspiration for a high quality piece of art that will be the focal point of the community garden.
- Rathfriland lies between the A1 and the Mourne coastal route, it has great untapped tourist potential. An unsightly, disused water tower (built in 1977) sits in the remains of a medieval castle. This typifies how it's not utilising its tourist attractions and recognising its potential job opportunities and prosperous future.
- We seek to find ways to utilise the areas rich history in an attractive non hostile way that opens up the visitors market and truly makes Rathfriland 'The Pride of the Hill'. We are twinning the town with 'Armstrong' in British Columbia, Canada -where a Rathfriland woman was the first European to enter BC in 1862. There's a memorial to her in the Armstrong city park. http://www.vernonmorningstar.com/news/278069981.html

I personally hope that the community workshops and discussions reveal that most of the residents are happy to live in a mixed community, and that nobody wishes to threaten anybody else's identity or to challenge their religious beliefs.

We have spoken to all of South Down MLAs about our approach and they are watching with interest. Stormont has a responsibility to lead on the issues of the past and flags but communities like ours have to be very proactive and build a 'normal' society street by street. The past cannot be changed, it's time for a lot of forgiveness and enthusiasm for the future. Northern Ireland is not full of Unionists and Republicans pulling in separate directions - a united community is an attainable goal in small towns like ours.

I am writing this as a resident and a trader in Rathfriland, and not as a member of the Rathfriland Regeneration Group as they are a non-political charity.

9th October 2014







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Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Report on the Inquiry into Building a United Community – Volume Three

Written Submissions (61-73), Departmental Papers and Memoranda, Research Papers and other relevant papers

Ordered by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to be printed on 1 July 2015

This report is the property of the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. Neither the report nor its contents should be disclosed to any person unless such disclosure is authorised by the Committee.

THE REPORT REMAINS EMBARGOED UNTIL COMMENCEMENT OF THE DEBATE IN PLENARY.

Mandate 2011/16

Fifteenth Report - NIA 257/11-16

Membership and Powers

Powers

The Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister is a Statutory Committee established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Belfast Agreement, Section 29 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Assembly Standing Order 48. The Committee has a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and has a role in the initiation of legislation.

The Committee has the power to;

- consider and advise on Departmental Budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee stage of primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Membership

The Committee has eleven members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five members.

The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Mr. Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)[1,2]
Mr. Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr. Alex Attwood[14]
Mr. Michael Copeland[3,10,11,12,16,17]
Miss Megan Fearon[5]
Mrs. Brenda Hale[8]
Mr. Alex Maskey
Ms. Bronwyn McGahan[6]
Mr. David McIlveen[15]
Mr. Stephen Moutray[7]
Mr. Jimmy Spratt[4,9,13]

1 With effect from 26 September 2011 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Ms Sandra Overend
2 With effect from 17 April 2012 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Mr Tom Elliott as Chairperson
3 With effect from 23 April 2012 Mr Danny Kinahan was appointed to the committee
4 With effect from 21 May 2012 Mr Tom Buchanan replaced Mr Jimmy Spratt
5 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Megan Fearon replaced Mr Francie Molloy
6 With effect from 10 September 2012 Ms Bronwyn McGahan replaced Ms Caitriona Ruane
7 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Stephen Moutray replaced Mr William Humphrey
8 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mrs Brenda Hale replaced Mr Trevor Clarke
9 With effect from 01 October 2012 Mr Paul Givan replaced Mr Tom Buchanan
10 With effect from 15 October 2012 Mr John McCallister replaced Mr Danny Kinahan
11 With effect from 25 February 2013 Mr Robin Swann replaced Mr John McCallister
12 With effect from 11 March 2013 Mr Leslie Cree replaced Mr Robin Swann
13 With effect from 15 April 2013 Mr Jimmy Spratt replaced Mr Paul Givan
14 With effect from 07 October 2013 Mr Alex Attwood replaced Mr Colum Eastwood
15 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr David McIlveen replaced Mr George Robinson
16 With effect from 06 October 2014 Mr Roy Beggs replaced Mr Leslie Cree
17 With effect from 13 October 2014 Mr Michael Copeland replaced Mr Roy Beggs

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List of Abbreviations

ACNI	Arts Council Northern Ireland
AoH	Ancient Order of Hibernians
BCDA	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
BCRC	Ballymoney Community Resource Centre
BME	Black Minority Ethnic
BRIC	Building Relationships in Communities
CAJ	Committee on the Administration of Justice
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERD	Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CoE	Council of Europe
CRED	Community Relations and Diversity in Education
CRIS	Community Relations in Schools
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CLC	Children's Law Centre
CoE	Council of Europe
CRC	Community Relations Council
CR/CD	Community Relations / Community Development
CRED	Community Relations Equality and Diversity
CSI	Cohesion, Sharing and Integration
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCAL	Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
DCGRP	District Councils Good Relations Programme
DE	Department of Education
DEL	Department for Employment and Learning
DFP	Department of Finance and Personnel
DOE	Department of the Environment
DoJ	Department of Justice
DPCSP	District Policing and Community Safety Partnership
DPP	District Policing Partnership
DRD	Department for Regional Development
DSD	Department for Social Development
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECNI	Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EU	European Union
EWL	European Women's Lobby
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FETO	Fair Employment and Treatment Order
FSME	Free School Meals Entitlement
GB	Great Britain
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
GFA	Good Friday Agreement
GRMF	Good Relations Measurement Framework

GRO	Good Relations Officer
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICR	Institute for Conflict Research
ICRED	International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
IRFU	Irish Rugby Football Association
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
LGD	Local Government District
LGR	Local Government Reform
LINI	Landscape Institute Northern Ireland
LORAG	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group
MIFC	Media Initiative for Children
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NBCAU	North Belfast Community Action Unit
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NICEM	Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
NIHE	Northern Ireland Housing Executive
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NILGA	Northern Ireland Local Government Association
NIPB	Northern Ireland Policing Board
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIYF	Northern Ireland Youth Forum
NUS – USI	National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland
OFMDFM	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
PCSP	Policing and Community Safety Partnership
PfG	Programme for Government
PHA	Public Health Agency
PSNI	Police Service for Northern Ireland
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RCN	Rural Community Network
RoI	Republic of Ireland
RRO	Race Relations Order
RUC GC	Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SELB	Southern Education and Library Board
SF	Sinn Fein
SIB	Strategic Investment Board
SOLACE	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers
T:BUC	Together: Building a United Community
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPRG	Ulster Political Research Group
WHO	World Health Organisation
YCNI	Youth Council Northern Ireland
YLT	Young Life and Times



Appendix 3

Written Submissions (61-73)

List of Written Submissions

1. Armoy Community Association
1a. Armoy Community Association Survey
2. Arts Council of Northern Ireland
3. Ballymena Borough Council
4. Ballymoney Community Resource Centre
5. Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
6. Ballynahinch Support Group
7. Banbridge District Council
8. Belfast City Council
9. Belfast Healthy Cities
10. Carnegie UK Trust
11. Children's Law Centre
12. Committee for the Environment
13. Committee for Finance and Personnel
14. Committee for Social Development
15. Committee on the Administration of Justice
16. Community Arts Partnership
17. Community Relations Council
17a. Community Relations Council Briefing Paper
17b. Community Relations Council Correspondence
18. Co-operation Ireland
19. Department for Employment and Learning
20. Department for Regional Development
21. Department for Social Development
22. Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
23. Department of Culture Arts and Leisure
24. Department of Education
25. Department of Justice
26. Derry City Council
27. Early Years
28. Equality Coalition
29. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
30. Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland
31. Forthspring Inter Community Group
32. Foyle Trust for Integrated Education
33. GAA, Irish Football Association, IRFU
34. Glencree Women's Programme
35. Golden D
36. Holywell Trust, Peace & Reconciliation Group, The Junction

37. Institute for Research in Social Sciences - University of Ulster
38. Interaction Belfast
39. Knox, C Professor & McWilliams, S
40. Landscape Institute Northern Ireland
41. Linking Generations Northern Ireland
42. National Union of Students – Union of Students in Ireland
43. Newtownabbey Borough Council
44. NIACRO
45. NIAMH (Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health)
46. NICIE (Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education)
47. Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
48. Northern Ireland Environment Link
49. Northern Ireland Housing Executive
50. Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
51. Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Briefing Paper

51a. Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Correspondence

52. Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership

52a. Northern Ireland Strategic Migration Partnership - Community Profiles for Local Government District (Extract)

53. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform
54. Northern Ireland Youth Forum
55. Oakgrove Integrated College
56. Participation and Practice of Rights
57. Playboard Northern Ireland
58. Police Service of Northern Ireland
59. Presbyterian Church in Ireland
60. Rathfriland Resident
61. Rural Community Network
62. Speedwell Trust
63. Start360
64. Strabane District Council
65. Suffolk Community Pocket Plots
66. The Bytes Project
67. The Peace Walls Programme
68. UNISON Northern Ireland
69. University of Ulster
70. Women's Resource and Development Agency
71. Youth Council for Northern Ireland
72. Youth Councils of Newry & Mourne, Armagh, Dungannon
73. Youthnet

Rural Community Network

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Rural Community Network
SUPPORTING RURAL COMMUNITIES

Response to the Inquiry by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister by

Rural Community Network

For further information contact:

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October 2014

Background to Rural Community Network

Rural Community Network (RCN) is a regional voluntary organisation established in 1991 by local community organisations to articulate the voice of rural communities on issues relating to poverty, disadvantage, equality, social exclusion and community development. Our vision is of vibrant, articulate, inclusive and sustainable rural communities across Northern Ireland contributing to a prosperous, equitable, peaceful and stable society. Our mission is to provide an effective voice for and support to rural communities, particularly those who are most disadvantaged.

RCN has 300 plus members across Northern Ireland. Its Board is representative of its membership base with more than half of its representatives (12) elected democratically from the community. The remaining representatives are a mix of organisations that provide support or have a sectoral interest within rural communities. RCN's aims are:

- to empower the voice of rural communities
- to champion excellence in rural community development practice
- to develop civic leadership in rural communities
- to actively work towards an equitable and peaceful society
- to promote the sustainable development of rural communities

Under the aim of actively working towards an equitable and peaceful society, RCN has had a long track record in developing community cohesion and promoting reconciliation in rural communities. We see community and good relations work as an integral part of our community development practice contributing to the sustainability of rural communities. Some of the work we have been involved in includes:

- Delivering Peace I & Peace II funding through a specific small grant programme for rural communities.
- Equality Diversity and Interdependence programme.
- Capacity Building towards Rural Reconciliation (funded by Peace II), delivering training on community development and good relations to grass roots rural groups; including a small grant element allowing groups to develop a project which addressed reconciliation and peace building in rural areas.
- Community Halls Advisory Service to facilitate groups to develop shared space in their communities.
- 'More than a Familiar Stranger' research into the perceptions and attitudes of migrant workers and rural host communities; highlighting the challenges of working and living together.
- Research report on the 'Experience of Protestant Communities in Border Areas'.
- Research report on 'Experiences of Catholic Minority Communities in Counties Antrim and Down'.
- Research report on 'Experience of Ethnic Minority Communities in Co Fermanagh'.
- 'Sharing over Separation' research report a precursor to the Rural Enablers programme.
- Rural Enablers programme, a Peace III funded regional programme. The Programme placed a staff member in each of the 6 Northern counties and 6

Border counties, to develop work with community organisations and rural institutions to address sectarianism, segregation and racism.

- Research report 'Beyond Belfast' examining issues of segregation and division in rural communities. A steering group of rural practitioners, voluntary/community organisations and statutory bodies regularly meet to discuss issues of rural contested space on a regional basis. This paper submitted to the inquiry is on behalf of representatives of that steering group, representing the rural sector across Northern Ireland.
- Facilitated development plan for the Confederation of Ulster Bands and subsequent action plan for the way forward.
- Currently delivering a substantial core funded programme (Community Relations Council) across rural Northern Ireland. This programme offers a wide range of initiatives to support community cohesion and peace building in rural areas.
- Currently delivering "Breaking the Silence" programme, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs. This programme offers rural communities the opportunity to engage in dialogue on hard and soft issues affecting their communities.

RCN Response to the Committee Inquiry

RCN's response is informed by our work over the past twenty years in rural communities addressing issues of community relations, good relations and reconciliation. Whilst this paper is a response to the inquiry by RCN we would like it noted that these issues are recurring themes raised at the Beyond Belfast steering group. For further information on the terms of reference of the Beyond Belfast steering group see Appendix 1.

The most important issue to address from our perspective is the need to recognise that sectarianism, segregation and racism, whilst less visible in rural communities compared to their urban counterparts are still prevalent:

"There is no question that in a rural context, issues of attachment to area, locality and in some cases the very land itself, are emotive. Such emotion, in conjunction with sectarianism, makes issues around division, which permeates through housing, schools, sport and leisure, basic services and community and cultural activities, challenging to address. This is particularly true when the lines of division can be much more subtle than in many urban areas and are not characterised by obvious physical structures and separation, but rather are based upon subjective perceptions of where is, and subsequently where is not, suitably safe and 'neutral'. The cost of such division both financially, in terms of duplication of services, and socially, in terms of the impact on people, continues to have detrimental consequences to the sustainability of rural communities both now and in the future. Black and minority ethnic communities also face distinct issues due to often increased isolation, visibility and distance from sources of support, information and services."

(RCN Rural Manifesto 2010)

In many rural communities, whilst physical interface barriers do not exist as they do in some urban areas, segregation is still widespread but can be harder for those living outside the area to perceive. Indicators of where sectarianism and segregation may be an issue in rural

areas include:

- Communities where flags, emblems and memorials are perceived as "marking territory".
- Communities where land and property is sold only to members of the same community thereby maintaining segregation.
- Communities where contentious marches take place.
- Communities where attacks on symbolic buildings e.g. Orange halls and GAA premises have taken place.

The Beyond Belfast report commissioned by Rural Community Network and the Community Relations Council in 2009 highlighted the issue of rural contested space whereby whilst physical interface barriers did not exist, rural communities were still segregated. This concept of rural contested space was developed and formulated through this research and in recent years, has become accepted within a number of key strategic government policies, in particular "Together Building a United Community."

The Beyond Belfast report identified a number of typologies which characterise contested space across Northern Ireland[1]

"*Our research suggests that a number of key factors are necessary for segregated spaces in small towns and rural areas to become contested spaces. These include:*

- *Demographic factors that impact upon a sense of control or dominance over space;*
- *The emergence of a degree of contest over space, resources and or services;*
- *The quality of relationships between members of the local Protestant unionist and Catholic nationalist communities, including the quality of political and community leadership;*
- *The presence of trigger events and activities;*
- *The existence of temporal triggers;*
- *The availability of target sites; and*
- *The experience of acts of sectarian violence*."[2]

The Rural Enabler Programme and the Cohesion Sharing and Integration programme, through RCN have undertaken a number of initiatives to try and break down those invisible barriers that still exist in rural areas. An example of this was the work carried out with Portavogie Cultural and Heritage Project. Participants in this project wished to engage with their Catholic neighbours in nearby Portaferry. There was some communication between

[1] Click on this link to access a copy of the Beyond Belfast report http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.co.uk/DatabaseDocs/doc_3480212.pdf

[2] Beyond Belfast pp4

the villagers and through a local storytelling and heritage project which developed dialogue and relationships and witnessed more positive relationships between the two villages allowing for more open channels of communication. The out workings of the programme were joint training with both communities, a family fun evening and a local historical publication. RCN has many other examples of the work it has undertaken in rural contested spaces.

What works in tackling good relations and sectarianism at community level?

Without an agreed definition of good relations and sectarianism, Rural Community Network work towards the principles and definitions used by the Community Relations Council , as an expert organisation in the field. *"Challenging sectarianism and racism, promoting equality, developing respect for diversity, and raising awareness of interdependence of the people and institutions within Northern Ireland."*

RCN is of the view that the TBUC policy should have presented a definition of good relations and sectarianism. The absence of definition of these terms is a weakness of the TBUC policy.

Clear identification and articulation of the issues and feelings at local level is also a crucial element to dealing with good relations and sectarianism. Having the ability to relate to community issues, working at the pace of the community, clearly identifying community need and working towards addressing those needs are all key components to addressing good relations. Relationship building and trust at a local level are crucial, alongside working in partnership with those in the locality.

There is a recognition that effective community development work at local level must address issues of community/good relations. Taking a community development approach to building good relations is essential.

RCN is also acutely aware that there needs to be an acknowledgment of the impact of the Troubles and the trauma that still exists amongst victims and survivors in the community. RCN staff are trained in recognising and dealing with trauma, with two members of staff trained in positive encounter dialogue and storytelling. This approach allows rural communities to begin to open up and discuss the hurts of the past in a safe and non-judgemental way. Linking in with expert organisations in the field, RCN have worked with many rural communities to begin this process of recovery, with an excellent track record. This is highly sensitive work and is a long term process and there needs to be a clear recognition that there are many rural dwellers that were significantly impacted by the conflict who still have not engaged in any process of recovery.

Independent and skilled facilitation is a key feature of tackling and working on good relations and sectarianism within Northern Ireland. Having an independent organisation dealing with the issues means that people can feel safer and freer to discuss issues

important to them without political or institutional influence. RCN also values the importance of a skilled workforce and regularly trains staff in skills necessary for this type of sensitive work, ranging from basic good relations training to anti sectarianism training, cultural diversity, mediation skills, negotiation skills, recognising trauma and dealing with contentious issues.

Empowering local communities to begin to engage in good relations at a pace that is suitable to their situation and community is essential. There must be a willingness to engage in this type of work and communities must feel empowered to engage in this type of work. Communities also need a "hand up" when it comes to this type of work, in that a rural expert to support, advise and guide them towards good relations is very important. Many communities do not have the skills or resources to engage in this type of work, even if the willingness is there.

It is also important to note that in terms of breaking down barriers and building relationships, short term interventions do not have the same impact as the development of longer term initiatives, therefore good relations programmes must be viewed in terms of at least a five year programme.

Given the clear linkages between racism and sectarianism the Community Relations Council recently facilitated a number of discussions with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss and reflect on OFMDFM's draft Racial Equality Strategy, A Sense of Belonging. Emerging from this discourse was the desire to find common ground on a number of issues that concerned those working for and with people from a BME and minority faith background living and working in Northern Ireland. Subsequently, a unified response was developed and launched in the form of a 'Common Platform' paper[3] which highlighted an agreed twelve common themes and principles critical to the successful implementation of a strategy**.**

Recommendations

RCN welcomes the specific references within the Together Building a United Community strategy to the challenges of tackling sectarianism, segregation and racism in rural communities. We also welcome the recognition of the existence of rural contested space and the need for adopting different approaches in rural communities. However, to date, we have seen little evidence that Together Building a United Community will be rural proofed – delivered in a different way to meet the particular needs of rural communities.

We recommend:

- That OFMDFM ensures that programmes and policies that are emerging from TBUC meet the needs of communities in rural areas through a robust rural-proofing process.

[3] http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CommonPlatform.pdf

- That OFMDFM and the wider Executive continue to engage with the breadth of civic society groups including community and voluntary sector, trade unions, churches, sporting organisations, loyal orders etc to develop further actions that will deliver on the ambitious objectives within the TBUC policy. The action plans themselves must also be accompanied with sufficient resourcing and funds to sustain interventions and programmes both in the short, medium and long term. We believe the example of the co-production of the United Youth programme which is being developed in partnership with stakeholders by the Department of Employment and Learning is an example of how the development of good relations programmes should take place.

- That OFMDFM and the wider Executive analyses how sectarianism, segregation and racism manifest differently in rural communities and that specific actions are developed to address these issues in rural areas.

- That OFMDFM and the wider Executive further investigates how these issues manifest in border communities, and how both governments North and South, can adopt a cross border approach to tackling sectarianism, racism and segregation where appropriate.

- That the programme clearly affirms the cross departmental nature of the programme and sets out how government departments will be expected to address these issues across their remit. The strategy should require government departments to set out SMART objectives which will realise the vision of TBUC strategy.

- RCN is concerned that the headline actions have come to dominate the delivery of TBUC to date. We recommend that OFMDFM give equal attention to the four priority areas.

- That the Community Relations Council is retained as an independent, critical voice that can offer advice and promote debate and understanding on these issues.

- That OFMDFM and other government departments ensure that issues of sectarianism, segregation and racism are taken seriously as key issues to be addressed by local councils through action plans developed by the community planning process and in the broader reform of local government process.

- That there needs to be an agreed definition in law of sectarianism and good relations and these definitions are communicated to all government departments, intermediary bodies and grass roots development organisations to ensure there is a common approach to this type of work.

- That there needs to be an agreement that equality and good relations are interrelated and that for a more sustainable cohesive community, we cannot have one without the other.

- TBUC must also address the racism faced by migrant communities as well as addressing how it will support host communities to respond to the challenges of diversity.

The effectiveness of the Good Relations indicators –

With regards to the effectiveness of the Good Relations indicators RCN, independently, responded to the OFMDFM consultation earlier in 2014. Some of the issues we raised were:

- How will the indicators be used to monitor good relations in rural areas – there are no interfaces as they are understood in towns and cities although rural communities can be just as segregated? There does not appear to be any question posed in the OFMDFM Good Relations surveys that specifically asks people in rural areas about their experiences of contested space as opposed to interfaces.
- With regard to the use of indicators from the NI the Life and Times survey it may be possible that more extreme views are not disclosed to researchers. Most of the NILT survey is administered face-to-face although there is a self completion element – under these conditions there is a risk that people do not express their true attitudes thereby under-estimating the extent of sectarian attitudes within the population.

Conclusion

RCN welcomes the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. We welcome the opportunity to meet with the OFMDFM committee either as an individual organisation or as part of a delegation from the broader Beyond Belfast group to explore these issues further.

Appendix 1

Beyond Belfast Steering Group

Terms of Reference

Vision

A peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair society free of contested spaces and interfaces and founded on tolerance, partnership, equality and mutual respect as a basis of good relationships.

Mission

To assist government, community and voluntary and others in working to transform and remove contested spaces and interfaces beyond Belfast.

Strategic Aims

The Beyond Belfast Steering Group (BBSG) was set up in 2009. It aims to:

- Influence Government policy and practice in relation to contested spaces and interfaces beyond Belfast (POLICY)
- Initiate or support peace-building initiatives in interface or contested spaces outside of Belfast. (PRACTICE)

Strategic Objectives

With these in mind, BBSG will:

- Support existing or new work that helps create the conditions for contested spaces to become non contentious and for the removal of all interface barriers beyond Belfast. (PRACTICE)
- Initiate work which will address contested space issues and supports where this is possible the removal of interface barriers as part of an inclusive, community centred approach towards building a shared society. (POLICY AND PRACTICE)
- Gather together information on interfaces and contested spaces beyond Belfast. (POLICY)

Indicative Strategic Actions

- Bring together key policy-makers and experienced practitioners working in the field of good relations, conflict transformation and community regeneration (POLICY and PRACTICE)
- Stimulate debate on contested space and interface areas beyond Belfast, through delivering a series of seminars, workshops, conference and research aimed at mainstreaming ideas and policy proposals and highlight challenges which need to be addressed to achieve transformation. (POLICY)
- Engage with and advise Government Departments on potential and existing Government interventions that are relevant to contested spaces and interfaces outside Belfast. (POLICY)
- Develop a programme with specific outcomes in partnership with other key organisations that pilots possible approaches to addressing contested spaces and interfaces outside Belfast (PRACTICE)
- Disseminate any learning from BBSG work (POLICY)
- Create opportunities for policy makers and practitioners to share experience and good practice. (PRACTICE)

Approach

The BBSG approach is based on 3 key elements:

- It must be inclusive and prioritise the needs of the local communities
- Strategies must be developed to meet the specific local context
- It will build upon existing good practice and address any gaps in provision

Membership

The membership will initially focus on representation from any statutory/community and voluntary organisation across the region with a remit for addressing contested spaces outside Belfast. Members will participate as names individual representatives of organisations, to try and promote consistency of attendance. Organisations may opt in and out of the process if and when they desire but no group will have the authority to disrupt the process.

Principles

This will require members of the BBSG to:

- Be influential within their agencies
- To encourage a flexible approach to practices which may be beneficial to enabling or sustaining good relations approaches which takes full account of the problems and opportunities for local areas.
- To share relevant information and best practice

- To ensure that all responses to the legacy of physical segregation the safety and security of the people living near to contested spaces and physical interfaces must be a priority.

Values

- The work of the Steering group will be carried out through promoting
- Mutual understanding
- The acquisition and dissemination of new knowledge
- Respect and tolerance
- Shared ownership of common issues, concerns, resources and opportunities
- Creativity and innovation, equality and accountability
- Self help and mutual support

Subgroups

Subgroups of members with particular expertise may be established for specific pieces of work

Partnership working

All partners within the process will be values participants, who are committed to the process and principles, which seek to meet the above aims and objectives. Individuals will take responsibility for their own actions and for regular communication to their agencies and organisations.

Meeting schedule

Meetings will be scheduled annually and will take place on a quarterly basis

Speedwell Trust

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for the Office of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Submission from the Speedwell Trust October 2014

Executive Summary

We believe that schools have a central role to play in improving community relations and in building a united community in Northern Ireland. The need for all schools to facilitate cross-community contact for their pupils on a regular basis is clear. The evidence suggests that nearly a quarter (24%) of young people in Northern Ireland who consider themselves either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' have no friends from the 'other' main religious community. Moreover, 45% of 16 year olds report having nowhere in their area where they could meet young people from a different religious background. There is also robust evidence that cross-community friendships and social activity are more likely among young people who have been given opportunities at school or in youth groups to mix with their counterparts on a cross-community basis.

The current level of participation by schools in cross-community shared education and community relations programmes is disappointing; of the 568 schools which responded to a recent survey on 'shared education' by the Department of Education, only 306 (54%) had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis.

In our view, there are three principal barriers to participation in cross-community collaboration by schools. The first and most important is undoubtedly that schools are not required to facilitate cross-community engagement for their pupils. Related to this is the lack of any statutory definition of shared education which defines it as cross-community activity. The third barrier is a lack of funding.

Our recommendations to the Committee are as follows:

- OFMdFM should produce an annual progress report, published in a timely fashion, with regard to the good relations indicators which it monitors.

- OFMdFM's 'Good Relations Indicators' reports should provide more analysis and should present recommendations for policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations.
- OFMdFM should clarify the term 'community relations participation' by schools in its good relations indicators reports, and should introduce the following additional indicators:
    - The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
    - The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
    - Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community
- The Committee should investigate the extent of and reasons for any delays by OFMdFM in making and communicating decisions on applications to its Central Good Relations Fund 2014/2015.
- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.
- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.
- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) programmes on a regular basis.
- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.
- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to synthesising the Department's shared education and CRED policies as there is clearly a considerable degree of overlap between them. However, if this is done, it is vital that the definition of shared education remains one which gives a central role to the importance of cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic schoolchildren. Clearly, religious division is only one form of division in Northern Ireland, and we welcome the fact that CRED is also designed to address other divisions and stereotypes. At the same time, Northern Ireland will be unable to move forward into a truly harmonious and peaceful society if its most fundamental division is not addressed in schools.

Introduction

The Trust greatly welcomes the decision by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to hold an inquiry into an issue which is of fundamental importance to the future stability and prosperity of Northern Ireland, and to the quality of life of its people. The Trust's own experience lies in its work in assisting schools to collaborate together in shared education and other cross-community programmes. The Trust is dedicated, in particular, to bringing together children from the two main religious communities in Northern Ireland.

For this reason, our submission focuses on the role of schools in facilitating cross-community interaction. We also consider the role of parents in this regard. However, we have not looked at the many other elements and issues involved in building greater cross-community activity and understanding, as these lie outside our direct experience. Although we believe that there are many very important ways in which we can develop a more peaceful and united community, we do believe that schools have a central role to play in progressing such work.

The Speedwell Trust

The Speedwell Trust is a charity which has 23 years' experience of delivering educational programmes designed to facilitate constructive contact and greater understanding between children from different religious and cultural backgrounds. It is based near Dungannon, but works with schools and youth groups across Northern Ireland and, on occasion, in border areas in the Republic of Ireland. To date, the Trust has provided services to more than 200 schools. Within the last financial year alone (2013/14), Speedwell delivered programmes in partnership with more than 100 schools.

Perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations

Theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services

The benefit of cross-community programmes for young people

One of the main reasons that cross-community contact between children and young people is so crucial is that the evidence suggests that a significant minority – just under a quarter – of young people in Northern Ireland who would consider themselves either 'Protestant' or 'Catholic' have no friends from the main religious community in which they did not grow up. In 2012, the annual Northern Ireland Young Life and Times (YLT) survey found that 24% of 16 year olds from the Protestant or Catholic religious community reported having no friends in the other main religious community. [1] Moreover, a previous YLT survey, carried out in 2011, found that such friendships were more likely among those who had previously participated in a cross-community scheme, or who had attended a planned integrated school.[2] Those who fall into these categories were also more likely to socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community.[3]

Furthermore, 45% of respondents to the 2012 YLT survey said that there were no facilities in their area where they could meet young people of a different religion, and 77% thought that cross-community relations would improve if there were more cross-community projects.[4]

Thus, there is a clear need for all children and young people who regard themselves as belonging to either the Protestant or Catholic community to be provided with opportunities to participate in cross-community programmes – both because these facilitate cross-community friendships and social activity, and because such a high proportion of young people cannot easily meet their counterparts from the 'other' community.

In addition, there is specific evidence that children and young people benefit from experiencing such contact on a sustained basis within an educational setting. A research team at Queens University, Belfast, found that children at schools which had participated in a shared education programme run by the University were less worried and more positive about the 'other' community than children at schools which did not participate in such a scheme.[5] This finding applied even when the team confined its comparison to schools which were located in areas viewed as having greater divisions.

The importance of parental attitudes

However, the evidence also suggests that parents have a major influence on the attitudes and friendship patterns of their children. A study which was published in 2010, involving 1,700 children in Northern Ireland and 880 of their parents, found that parental social attitudes were the most powerful factor influencing the social and political attitudes of their children.[6] This certainly suggests that, if we are to encourage children to have open and positive attitudes towards those from different cultural and religious traditions, it is vital to engage with parents as well.

Schools' participation in shared education and community relations programmes

The current level of participation by schools in cross-community shared education and community relations programmes is disappointing; of the 568 schools which responded to a recent survey on 'shared education' by the Department of Education, only 306 (54%) had been involved in shared education on a cross-community basis. In other words, nearly half (262 or 46%) had not participated in cross-community shared education.[7]

Moreover, the survey also found that only 15% of schools which had participated in shared education had done so in a way which involved the whole school.[8] We believe it is essential that all children from either the Protestant or Catholic tradition in Northern Ireland are given the opportunity to engage in a sustained and meaningful way with children from the other main community on a regular basis. This can only happen if each class in every relevant school is provided with such an opportunity. It is also the only way in which the Programme for Government target, referred to previously, can be achieved.

Furthermore, the 2012 Northern Ireland Kids' Life and Times Survey, which surveyed children in P7, found that only 58% reported having taken part in an activity with a child from another school.[9]

Although the YLT survey in the same year found that a much larger proportion - 82% - of 16 year olds reported having taken part in such activity, only 72% of those who had participated in shared education (i.e. 59% of the whole sample) said that some of the pupils from other schools had been from a different religious background. [10] It would seem, therefore, that substantial proportions of both primary and post-primary pupils are not being given any opportunity by their own school for cross-community engagement with children from another school.

In addition to shared education, a further route through which schools can facilitate cross-community engagement by their pupils is provided by the Department of Education. In 2011, the Department of Education published *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education* (CRED), a new policy which was designed to encourage all schools to foster mutual understanding and good community relations.[11] The Department now provides some funding on an annual basis to schools and youth groups to help implement CRED.

The 2011 YLT survey found that 70% of their 16-year old respondents reported having engaged, at some stage, in activity which would fall under the umbrella of the CRED policy, either in school, in a youth group, or in both types of setting. Most of these respondents (60% of the whole sample) had taken part in such activity at school. Conversely, 30% of respondents said they had not participated in such activity.[12] However, this survey did not examine how many of these young people met members of the other main religious community as part of this activity.

We are also very concerned about the level of funding which is made available to schools and youth groups for the implementation of CRED. The Department of Education has significantly reduced the resources which it allocates for the support of community relations in schools. Up to March 2010, it allocated some £3.6m annually for such support in both formal and informal educational settings. It now allocates only £1.2m approx. annually.[13]

Only 15% of schools (181) took part in projects which were allocated funding by the Department through this programme in 2013/14.[14]

We further note, from data in OFMdFM's most recent 'Good Relations Indicators' report, that the proportion of schools engaging in community relations activity fell drastically between 2006/07, when it stood at 43%, to 2011/12, when it stood at 21%.[15] It is not clear, from the report, how the OFMdFM data is compiled. It may refer only to schools which have been allocated funding for community relations programmes. Obviously, some schools may participate in community relations activities without recourse to external funding. However, the figures are undoubtedly a cause for concern. Moreover, they mirror informal feedback which we have received from schools which suggests that far fewer schools are now participating in such activity than was the case previously.

Barriers to cross-community collaboration by schools

In our view, there are three principal barriers to participation in cross-community collaboration by schools. The first and most important is undoubtedly that schools are not required to facilitate cross-community engagement for their pupils. Related to this is the lack of any statutory definition of shared education which defines it as cross-community activity. The third barrier is a lack of funding.

As the Committee will be aware, the Northern Ireland Executive's current *Programme for Government 2011–2015* contains a commitment to ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015.[16] In addition, the OFMdFM policy document, *Together: Building a United Community* (TBUC), contains a commitment to deliver ten 'shared education' campuses.[17] The Education Minister subsequently made a pledge, in January 2014, to deliver on this promise.

However, if shared education is to form a central element of the Executive's approach to cross-community relations, as we believe it most certainly should, it is essential that all involved are using the same clear definition of 'shared education', and that any 'shared education' will facilitate sustained and meaningful contact between children from the two main religious traditions in Northern Ireland.

We have been disappointed, therefore, to discover that there is no clear statutory definition of 'shared education', and that the Executive seems to be using a definition which appears to allow collaboration between Catholic grammar and non-grammar schools, on the one hand, and between predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary grammar and non-grammar schools, on the other, to be viewed as 'shared education'. It also appears to allow for collaboration between a Catholic primary and Catholic post-primary school, or a predominantly Protestant controlled primary school and a predominantly Protestant controlled or voluntary post-primary school.

The definition in question was drawn up by the Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education. This Group was tasked by the Executive with providing a set of recommendations on how best to take forward shared education. It reported in March 2013. It defined shared education as follows:

> Shared education involves two or more schools or other educational institutions from different sectors working in collaboration with the aim of delivering educational benefits to learners, promoting the efficient and effective use of resources, and promoting equality of opportunity, good relations, equality of identity, respect for diversity and community cohesion.[18]

Crucially, however, the report further clarifies that: "By 'different sectors', the definition refers to schools and other education providers of differing ownership, sectoral identity and ethos, management type or governance." [19]Such a definition seems to allow the 'single community' interpretations referred to above.

Moreover, the impression that something close to the Group's definition is being used by the Department of Education and by schools is reinforced by the fact that, in the "shared education" section of the schools' survey carried out by the Department of Education, referred to earlier, the Department lists a number of types of 'shared education' collaboration in which each school might have participated and includes, as an option, collaboration with a school "from the same sector (e.g. controlled, maintained, integrated, Irish medium)". Thus, although the Department has a different definition of the term 'sector' from the Ministerial Advisory Group, it appears to share the view that 'shared education' does not have to involve cross-community collaboration.[20]

Any such 'single community' collaboration, while it may bring many other benefits, is not going to facilitate the type of cross-community contact which the evidence shows is so important in helping

to increase cross-community understanding and foster good cross-community relationships in Northern Ireland.

We appreciate that the Education Minister has since committed to bringing forward a definition of shared education and appreciate that the final statutory definition may differ from the above.[21] However, we are concerned that, in the absence of any official definition, the broad definition recommended by the Working Group will be used, in the meantime, by the Department of Education, education boards and schools in working towards the Executive's current policy objectives concerning shared education. Moreover, until a firm statutory definition is produced, it will be impossible for either OFMdFM or the Department of Education to monitor robustly the degree and quality of shared education which is taking place, as it will not be clear what it is monitoring.

In addition, the Department of Education's CRED policy document stipulates only that schools should provide opportunities for their pupils to interact with others from different backgrounds "within the resources available"; in other words, where a school feels it cannot afford to initiate such cross-community engagement, that engagement does not have to take place.[22]

Moreover, at present, there is no dedicated funding stream to assist schools in collaborating on a shared education basis. As noted above, there has also been a significant reduction in the amount of funding which the Department of Education provides for schools' community relations programmes. Perhaps not surprisingly, survey evidence suggests that lack of funding is the major barrier which schools face when it comes to initiating shared education and cross-community schemes.

Lack of resources was the obstacle cited most commonly by the schools which took part in a survey on shared education carried out by a team from Queen's University; 83% of schools which responded selected this factor as a barrier to delivering shared education.[23] The issue was also identified by 53% of respondents to a survey which the Speedwell Trust carried out with schools with which it has worked (See Table 1). This survey asked schools to identify which factors they felt created potential obstacles for schools in participating in cross-community programmes.[24] Moreover, the barrier most commonly identified by the respondents to our survey was transport costs, cited by 85% of respondents.

Accessing Central Good Relations funding: the Trust's experience

In this regard, we wish to highlight our disappointing experience with regard to the fund established by OFMdFM to help achieve the Executive's good relations targets and to deliver its TBUC strategy. OFMdFM published an invitation to apply for the 2014-15 Central Good Relations fund in November 2013. The deadline for applications was 10th February 2014, and the Department's guidance note for applications specifically stated that projects which received funding must be delivered during the 2014-15 financial year.[25] However, the Department did not provide any information on the total amount of funding which would be available under this scheme.

The Trust duly applied for funding for a proposed project which would contribute towards the first of the four Ministerial priorities outlined in TBUC - 'our children and young people'. TBUC states that

the shared aim of Ministers is "to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations"[26].

Our proposed project would also have assisted in delivering two of the key actions outlined in TBUC under this Ministerial priority, namely:

- Roll out a "buddy scheme" in publicly run nursery and primary schools
- Develop, in partnership with the relevant agencies and Departments, age-appropriate primary and post-primary anti-sectarianism resources, and ensure that teachers are trained, equipped and supported to deliver an effective anti-sectarianism module[27]

To date, seven months on from submitting our application, we have not received a decision with regard to funding from OFMdFM, despite following up with the Department on a number of occasions. We have received just two emails during this time, one in March and one in May, both of which stated that staff were assessing the applications, that demand for funding had been very high, and that OFMdFM would let applicants know the outcome of their application as soon as possible. Our last contact with the Department was in August when we were given the same message verbally. We believe the delay in reaching and communicating to us a decision on our application is unacceptable.

It would now be impossible for us to deliver the whole of our proposed project within the 2014-15 financial year. We assume many other organisations which applied for funding are in the same position as ourselves. We would urge the Committee to investigate what proportion of applicants have received funding to date and how much of the funding originally allocated for the Central Good Relations Fund 2014-15 has been awarded and distributed. Where funding has not been allocated and where there have been lengthy delays in notifying applications of the outcome of their application, we would urge the Committee to examine the reasons for this to try to ensure that the situation is not repeated again in future years.

Parental concerns

It might well be assumed that one of the factors which might deter many schools from engaging in cross-community initiatives would be the possibility that parents might object. In general, however, we have not found parental attitudes to present any barrier to the work that we carry out. At the same time, we appreciate that some schools may be reticent about engaging in cross-community programmes because they fear the reaction which they may receive from some parents. Indeed, while most of the schools which responded to our survey did not see lack of support from parents as a barrier to shared education, 11% of respondents did feel it was an obstacle (see Table 1). Thus, the risk of upsetting some parents clearly is a deterrent factor for some schools.

Best practice in bringing together divided communities, and in developing shared space and shared services

We are not providing any comment on international best practice in the field of cross-community work in schools, as we have no direct experience of such work. However, we do have considerable relevant experience in Northern Ireland and, on occasion, in border areas of the Republic of Ireland. Below we highlight two of our most successful cross-community schools' programmes which we believe provide models of good practice which could be rolled out more widely.

Diversity and Drums

The success of our Diversity and Drums programme illustrates the value of facilitating children in directly addressing cultural difference and potentially contentious issues, and encouraging them to understand, respect and appreciate cultural diversity. For the children, the highlight of the programme is generally the opportunity which it provides them to have a go at playing a variety of different types of drum, including both the bodhran and the Lambeg drum. Participating in an activity which most children find hugely enjoyable is a great means of breaking down barriers and reducing any anxieties which the children may feel. However, the programme, through an educational thematic unit, also enables children to find out how drums have been used in different periods of history and in different parts of the world. As part of the programme, children also discuss sensitive issues such as bullying, sectarianism and racism, including the ways in which discriminatory and aggressive behaviour and attitudes impact on people, and on what can be done to address these issues.

The Diversity and Drums thematic unit, which is aimed at children in Key Stage 2, consists of 12 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. Schools are encouraged to deliver this module to joint groups of pupils from each of the partner schools. To date 30 schools have taken part in this programme and the feedback from them has been overwhelmingly positive.

Connecting Communities

The Connecting Communities programme is also aimed at children in Key Stage 2 and has been very successful. As with Diversity and Drums, Connecting Communities does not shy away from contentious issues, but rather encourages children to think about cultural difference. In this instance, the module explores how our concept of community is formed, the differences within a community, and how we come to think of some people as being 'inside' or 'outside' our community. Participants are also asked to imagine what it would be like to be a newcomer to their own community and how they might feel.

The Connecting Communities thematic unit consists of 14 inter-related activities which are designed for use across one or two school terms by two schools whose pupils are each from predominantly different religious traditions. To date, 15 schools have taken part in the practical workshops and, once more, feedback has been very positive.

What good relations means/how sectarianism and division can be addressed

Challenges at interface areas

We note that, in examining how sectarianism and division can be addressed, the Committee intends to investigate the specific challenges involved in tackling these issues in interface areas. However, we would caution against the assumption that the most entrenched divisions and negative attitudes exist only in interface areas. In our experience, profound distrust of the 'other' community can exist in areas which are not viewed as interface districts.

Nevertheless, the evidence clearly indicates that shared education can have a positive impact, even in sharply divided communities. We noted previously that the Queen's University research, to which we referred earlier, found that children at schools in more divided areas which had participated in a shared education programme were less worried and more positive about the 'other' community than children at schools in such areas which did not participate in such a scheme.[28]

One potential challenge in bringing together children from different schools on a cross-community basis can be that parents and/or their children may view with apprehension the idea of travelling to a school located in an area associated with the 'other' community. In our own experience, there has only been one instance where a large number of parents objected to their children visiting such a school. This was almost certainly because the school was located in an area which they viewed as being associated with paramilitaries from the 'other' community. This particular instance is the only occasion in our 23 years of running such programmes in which a school has had to withdraw from the scheme, due to objections from a large number of parents.

Where such concerns do exist, however, it can be very helpful to deliver some or all of the programme activities at a neutral venue. Indeed, some rural schools don't have the space to accommodate large numbers of additional pupils, and so welcome the opportunity to use an external venue. Speedwell offers such a facility at our headquarters in Parkanaur Forest near Dungannon, where children have the opportunity to experience a range of outdoor activities in the forest setting, and to make use of indoor accommodation which is designed to accommodate large groups of children. The facility has proved very popular with schools.

Our own experience suggests that one of the most effective ways to engage with parents is to ensure that our cross-community programmes include a performance by the children involved to which parents are invited. Where this opportunity is offered, it is generally taken up by most parents who respond positively. Such opportunities enable parents to have a better understanding of our programmes and to engage with each other on a cross-community basis.

In addition, on those rare occasions where there is real opposition from parents, we have also found that it can be very helpful to engage directly with such parents in an open and constructive way prior to commencing a cross-community programme. Moreover, where there is any parental mistrust, it has never arisen from the cross-community contact per se, nor from the actual content of the programmes. Parental objections have only been raised on very infrequent occasions due to the location of a particular school, as mentioned above, or due to the involvement of an institution which has a negative symbolic significance for the parent(s) concerned e.g. a particular church or the PSNI.

Role of communities

We note that the Inquiry's terms of reference include an examination of "the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers". We would urge the Committee not to ignore the vital role of schools in this regard. Indeed, for nearly all children and young people of school age, their school is the community in which they spend most of their time. The evidence which we have already cited on the impact of shared education and cross-community schools' programmes demonstrates the compelling need for schools to play a central role in helping to integrate our communities.

Moreover, many children are being taught in schools which have a pupil composition which is almost entirely Protestant or Catholic. In 2012, The Detail website obtained data from the Department of Educated which, according to The Detail's website, showed that nearly half of all schoolchildren in Northern Ireland were being educated in schools which were 95% or more Protestant or Catholic in pupil composition.[29] Of the 1,070 schools in Northern Ireland in 2011-12:

- 46% of schools (493) had a pupil composition which was 95% or more Protestant or Catholic
- 27% of schools (291) had either no Protestant or no Catholic children on their rolls

While we acknowledge that there are now significantly fewer schools than hitherto which are very largely Catholic or Protestant in pupil composition, it still remains the case that a very large minority of schoolchildren are being educated in a school which is largely or entirely Protestant or Catholic in its make-up. It is especially vital that children in these schools should be provided with the opportunity for sustained interaction on a regular basis with pupils from the main religious tradition other than their own.

Effectiveness of Good Relations indicators in monitoring and measuring progress of government interventions

We welcome the fact that OFMdFM monitors, on a regular basis, a wide range of 'good relations' indicators. However, we are disappointed that the last progress report in this regard was published in 2012.[30] If progress is to be monitored effectively, it should be carried out and reported on in a timely fashion on an annual basis. Moreover, we are further disappointed that the most recent monitoring report is presented in a largely descriptive manner with little attempt at analysis and no recommendations for any policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations. If the monitoring is to be of value, it is essential that it feeds into a regular process of policy analysis and review.

We have a specific concern regarding the report's lack of clarity as to how the 'community relations participation by schools' indicator was compiled. We believe that the quoted statistics may relate to schools which receive funding for such activity, but this is not clear. In addition, we believe there is an urgent need for indicators which help to measure the following:

- The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
- The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
- Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community

The first of these proposed indicators is particularly important because, as already highlighted, neither shared education nor the Department of Education's current community relations policy, CRED, require schools to ensure that any such activity provides opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils. The other two proposed indicators have been selected because they are vital in helping to ascertain the degree to which children and young people develop friendships on a cross-community basis, and the extent to which children and young people are prevented from developing such friendships should they so wish.

Recommendations

In summary, our recommendations to the Committee are as follows:

- OFMdFM should produce an annual progress report, published in a timely fashion, with regard to the good relations indicators which it monitors.
- OFMdFM's 'Good Relations Indicators' reports should provide more analysis and should present recommendations for policy changes which might enhance progress towards improved community relations.
- OFMdFM should clarify the term 'community relations participation' by schools in its good relations indicators reports, and should introduce the following additional indicators:
    - The extent to which schools are providing opportunities for meaningful and sustained cross-community contact for pupils
    - The extent of cross-community friendships among children and young people
    - Whether children and young people have anywhere to meet their counterparts from the other main community
- The Committee should investigate the extent of and reasons for any delays by OFMdFM in making and communicating decisions on applications to its Central Good Relations Fund 2014/2015.
- The Education Minister should bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity, a statutory definition of shared education which makes explicit that it must involve meaningful cross-community interaction by pupils on a sustained basis.

- Using this definition, the Department of Education must make it a statutory obligation for schools to ensure that all their pupils are provided with the opportunity to participate in shared education on a regular basis.

- The Department must also make available sufficient funding to ensure that all schools can ensure that their pupils have the opportunity to participate in meaningful cross-community shared education and CRED programmes on a regular basis.

- The Department must institute a robust system of monitoring which enables it to evaluate, on a regular basis, whether and how each individual school is implementing shared education and CRED, including the extent and quality of cross-community engagement which is offered by each school.

- The Department should introduce an award scheme for schools which provide outstanding examples of good practice in shared education and CRED.

In addition, we believe that consideration should be given to synthesising the Department's shared education and CRED policies as there is clearly a considerable degree of overlap between them. However, if this is done, it is vital that the definition of shared education remains one which gives a central role to the importance of cross-community contact between Protestant and Catholic schoolchildren. Clearly, religious division is only one form of division in Northern Ireland, and we welcome the fact that CRED is also designed to address other divisions and stereotypes. At the same time, Northern Ireland will be unable to move forward into a truly harmonious and peaceful society if its most fundamental division is not addressed in schools.

Table 1: Speedwell Trust survey responses to "What are the main obstacles to shared education activities with schools from a different education sector?" (N = 65. Respondents could tick more than one option.)

–	Agree–	Don't know–	Disagree–	Number of respondents responding to option
– cost of transport	**85.25%** 52	**1.64%** 1	**13.11%** 8	61
– lack of training for staff	**38.60%** 22	**19.30%** 11	**42.11%** 24	57
– lack of support from parents	**10.91%** 6	**9.09%** 5	**80.00%** 44	55
– local community tensions	**17.54%** 10	**19.30%** 11	**63.16%** 36	57
– no suitable facilities	**22.22%** 12	**11.11%** 6	**66.67%** 36	54
– lack of resources	**53.45%** 31	**15.52%** 9	**31.03%** 18	58
– curriculum pressures	**63.16%** 36	**5.26%** 3	**31.58%** 18	57
– lack of willingness from staff	**5.36%** 3	**16.07%** 9	**78.57%** 44	56
– poor relationship with partner school	**5.45%** 3	**7.27%** 4	**87.27%** 48	55
– lack of partner school	**16.36%** 9	**10.91%** 6	**72.73%** 40	55

[1] Devine, Paula (2013) *Research Update No. 83: Into the mix.* ARK Northern Ireland.

[2] Devine, Paula and Robinson, Gillian (2012) *Research Update No. 79: No more 'us and them' for 16 year olds.* ARK Northern Ireland.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Devine, Paula (2013), op. cit.

[5] Hughes, Joanne et al. (2010) *School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An Evaluation of School Collaboration in Northern Ireland*. Queen's University, Belfast, p. 40.

[6] Stringer, Maurice et al., 'Parental and school effects on children's political attitudes in Northern Ireland' in *British Journal of Educational Psychology* (2010), 80, 223–240.

[7] Department of Education, *Omnibus Survey: Shared Education*, October 2013, Tables 5 and 10. Table 10 gives a percentage for involvement in cross-community shared education which excludes those schools which did not participate in any shared education. It is important, therefore, to read both these tables in conjunction with each other to discern the actual level of cross-community engagement.

[8] Department of Education, op. cit., Table 8.

[9] Kids' Life and Times 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/klt/results/Shared_Education.html

[10] Young Life and Times Survey 2012 Survey results. Available at: http://www.ark.ac.uk/ylt/2012/Shared_Education/

[11] See Department of Education (2011) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education*. Available at: http://www.credni.org/contents/what-is-cred/

[12] Devine, Paula (2013) *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED): Findings from the 2012 Young Life and Times Survey* ARK Northern Ireland

[13] The previous figure is cited in Department of Education, 2011, op. cit., p.8, para. 2.4. In Assembly Written Answer AQW29095/11-15, the Education Minister stated that his Department provided £1.163m in 2012/13 to fund the delivery of CRED.

[14] The figures quoted are drawn from statistics supplied by the Education Minister in Assembly Written Answer AQW 29626/11-15.

[15] OFMdFM (2012) *Good Relations Indicators – 2012 Update*, 4.11. Available at: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/pfg-economics-statistics/equalityresearch/research-publications/gr-pubs.htm

[16] Northern Ireland Executive *Programme for Government 2011 – 15*, p. 51.

[17] See: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community

[18] Ministerial Advisory Group on Shared Education *(2013) Advancing Shared Education*, p. xiii. Available at: http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEducation/MinisterialAdvisoryGroup/Filestore/Filetoupload,382123,en.pdf

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Department of Education, October 2013, op. cit., Table 10.

[21] Education Minister. *Advancing Shared Education.* Ministerial Statement to Assembly, 22nd October, 2013. Available at: http://www.deni.gov.uk/advancing_shared_education_-_22_october_2013_docx.pdf

[22] Department of Education, 2011, op. cit., para. 6.5.

[23] Hughes, Joanne et al. (2010) *School Partnerships and Reconciliation: An Evaluation of School Collaboration in Northern Ireland*. Queen's University, Belfast, p. 23.

[24] The survey was carried out online in June 2014. An invitation to take part in the survey was issued by email to 130 schools. 65 (50%) responded.

[25] OFMdFM, *Guidance Notes. Central Good Relations Funding Programme 2014/2015,* November 2013.

[26] OFMdFM (2013) *Together: Building a United Community*, p.4.

[27] op. cit., p.5.

[28] Hughes, Joanne et al., op. cit., p. 40.

[29] See: http://www.thedetail.tv/issues/150/religioninschools/how-integrated-are-schools-where-you-live

[30] OFMdFM, 2012, op. cit.

Start 360

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Zoë Anderson

09/10/2014

START360™ Change Starts Here

Start360 is Northern Ireland's leading provider of support services to young people, adult offenders and families in the community.

We provide a range of services and interventions in the areas of health, justice and employability. Good relations is at the core of everything we do and has been at the heart of our organisation throughout our 21 years.

Our mission statement is '**Change Starts Here**'.

General comments

Start360 welcomes the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. Our main interaction to date with the strategy has been through the development of the United Youth Programme and working relationships with the officials in DEL who are responsible for it.

Across government, there needs to be more recognition of the work that voluntary sector organisations do in the good relations arena and the added value that this brings.

What good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed

Start360 believes that there is something of a general opinion that sectarianism has dissolved over the past few years, yet sadly the reality is that it is everywhere we look within NI. While people generally have become a little more PC, if you scratch the surface it is there just as it was before. Government has done a good job rebranding and repackaging it, but it is still the same monster it always was.

In our own experience, sectarianism and division do not immediately manifest with the young people we work with - they work alongside each other in all our services and their community or other background is rarely an issue. However, when they return to their lives outside of the Start360 experience, the language, influences and prejudices also return. Even the youngest of children can present with less tolerance and understanding of sectarianism.

Start360 delivered two cohorts of the YouthWorks programme (DE initative funded through IFI) in the North West area in 2013. Sadly, the funding for this has been discontinued. However, what YouthWorks proved, as a pilot intervention, is that with the right supports and environment sectarianism can be tackled and addressed in a manner which is sustained when a young person returns to their own community and life.

For example, an analysis of the young people who completed the last cohort of YouthWorks in 2013 showed that 92% of young people reported a raised awareness of and respect for other cultures and communities within their city.

START360

Change Starts Here

Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community.

Our recommendations would be:

1) Funding for the YouthWorks programme is reinstated;
2) The United Youth Programme ensures that it meets Good Relations needs among its participants;
3) The learning from both is carried into other Good Relations programmes, not just aimed at young people but at their families and communities.

Contact

For further information, please contact:

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START360

Change Starts Here

Strabane District Council

Response to Inquiry into Together Building a United Community from Strabane District Council's Good Relations Partnership

1. Introduction

The Good Relations Partnership is an interagency group that oversees the work of the Good Relations Section of Strabane District Council. The purpose of the Partnership is to provide a forum for local civic, commercial, statutory and community representatives to discuss how to progress the development of local communities in an environment where religious, political, racial and cultural expression and differences are understood and expressed in a way that is sensitive to others.

The partnership consists of elected members, community representatives, a BME representative and a representative from the LGBT sector. The following agencies are also represented: PSNI, NIHE, Western Health and Social Care Trust, Western Education and Library Board and DOE Roads Service.

2. General Response

At the last meeting of the Partnership (9/9/14) the Inquiry into TBUC was discussed and the following observations made:

- Generally Terms of Reference viewed as vague
- Little reference made to hard issues such as flags, emblems and parading which some perceived as a step backwards with regard to A Shared Future
- Timing: TBUC has yet to be delivered on as Letters of Offer have only just been received by Councils from OFMDFM in respect of delivering the Council's Good Relations Programme.
- General concern that many areas of work are being targeted under TBUC, however no additional funding is being made available. In fact the opposite is happening with budget cuts across all Departments
- A lot of evidence already exists re good practice in Good Relations work, gathered by a number of agencies including the Department of OFMDFM via GR quarterly and annual reports
- LGBT issues have no mention in the strategy, yet are vital in promoting and accepting diversity and identity

3. Examples of Good Practice

Members of the Good Relations Partnership highlighted the following examples of good practice locally in bringing divided communities together:

- Fleadh in Castlederg: A genuine cross community event in a divided community
- Annual LGBT festival: a series of events over a three day period to enhance awareness and visibility of the LGBT community
- Community Relations Week: A series of events involving a range of different communities to highlight and showcase good practice in good relations
- Sports and Arts initiatives that promote Good Relations
- Attitudinal surveys that assess perceptions re Good Relations, particularly on hard issues such as parading, flags and emblems
- Capacity Building work with West Ulster Bands Forum to develop a strategy for engagement

- Mentoring with groups to develop awareness and engagement on a cross community basis
- Awareness raising events to promote all aspects of Good Relations & Equality, particularly inclusion of all groups including LGBT
- Intergenerational activities: For example a photographic exhibition developed by local groups to highlight the differences and commonalities between young and old and to build relationships
- Strabane Ethnic Community Association ten year celebrations and opening of a Town Centre premises, associated celebrations and festivals e.g. Diwali, Intercultural Food and Entertainment Night

On behalf of Strabane District Council's Good Relations Partnership I hope that you find the above comments/observations useful.

Amanda Biega
Good Relations Officer, on behalf of Strabane District Council's Good Relations Partnership

Suffolk Community Pocket Plots

SUFFOLK COMMUNITY FORUM

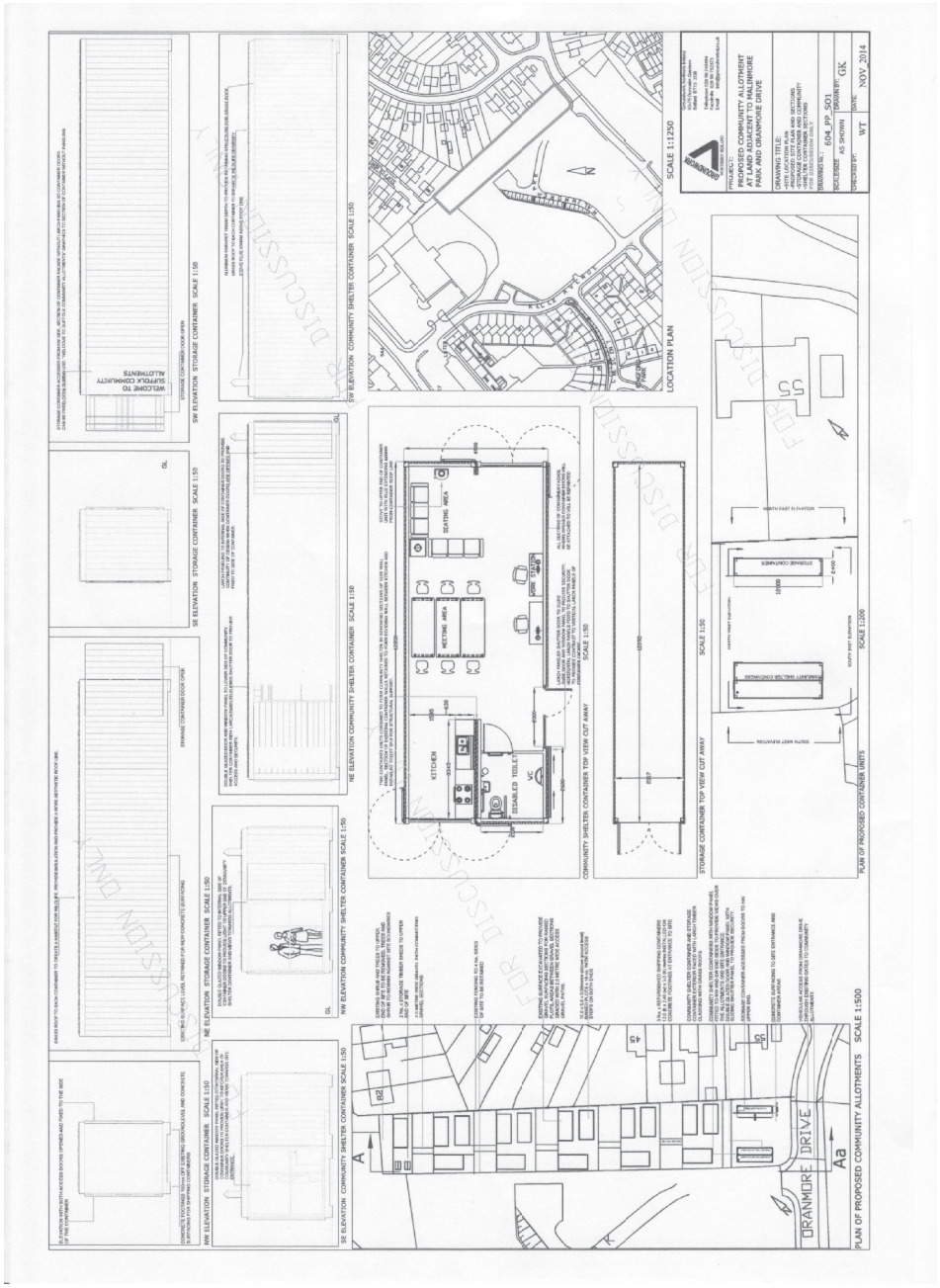
'INTERFACE POCKET PLOTS' (family size shared allotments)

and a

'FISHING AND LEISURE PARK AND HORTICULTURAL TRAINING CENTRE'

- The site or the shared family allotments is .8 acre buffer zone on the interface between the Suffolk Estate and the Suffolk Crescent/Park/Willowvale and Brooke areas off Black's Road.
- The buffer zone runs adjacent to a large tract of land called Malinmore where houses were demolished twenty years ago and in the intervening years became one the most contested areas in West Belfast.
- Suffolk Community Forum has been working with the support of the NIHE since 2009 to transform both pieces of land ultimately for shared use.
- Through the following years we have developed a community garden in partnership with Belfast City Council, won the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and introduced accredited horticultural training as a pilot.
- The pocket plots will constitute Phase 1 of the wider development and after almost a year of negotiations with all stakeholders an agreement has been reached for pedestrian access for plot holders from both sides of the interface.
- The amount of funding is for £350,000 and we will be actively seeking some matching funding to assist completion.
- The overall project has been designed as a social enterprise where underpinning features as noted beneath will be crucial to economic viability:

  - A Horticultural Training Centre also running Government Programmes – responding to the low qualification and high unemployment levels in the wider area.
  - The creation of an Interface Market selling produce from the community garden and surplus from the allotments where an Allotment Association will run the facility and assist in the development of an outdoor classroom for visiting schools. We also plan to sell value-added wild foods foraged locally and in conjunction with the community garden, run health and well-being programmes.
  - The fishing ponds will be managed by local Angling Clubs and the park will be marketed for local events and festivals together with daily usage by local people on a shared basis.


PROPOSED COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT
AT LAND ADJACENT TO GRANMORE
PARK AND GRANMORE DRIVE
LOCATION PLAN
SCALE 1:1250
PLAN OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY ALLOTMENTS SCALE 1:500
GRANMORE DRIVE
NE ELEVATION STORAGE CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
SE ELEVATION STORAGE CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
NW ELEVATION STORAGE CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
SW ELEVATION STORAGE CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
NE ELEVATION COMMUNITY SHELTER CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
SW ELEVATION COMMUNITY SHELTER CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
NW ELEVATION COMMUNITY SHELTER CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
SE ELEVATION COMMUNITY SHELTER CONTAINER SCALE 1:50
COMMUNITY SHELTER CONTAINER TOP VIEW CUT AWAY
STORAGE CONTAINER TOP VIEW CUT AWAY
PLAN OF PROPOSED CONTAINER UNITS SCALE 1:200
KITCHEN
DISABLED TOILET
MEETING AREA
SEATING AREA
STORAGE CONTAINER
DRAWING TITLE:
604_PP_S01
SCALE/SIZE: AS SHOWN
DRAWN BY: GK
CHECKED BY: WT
DATE: NOV 2014
FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

The Bytes Project

Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) Consultations

Inquiry into Building a United Community

Response from the Young People who use the services of The Bytes Project

Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) Consultations

Inquiry into Building a United Community

1.0 Overview

OFMDFM committee is currently carrying out an inquiry into building a united community. "The purpose of this inquiry is to inform the Executive's approach in the actions it takes to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance; and to make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy in uniting communities and community integration, including how communities are involved in decision making. The Inquiry will also seek to make recommendations based on the evidence gathered".

In order to feed into this inquiry The Bytes Project has consulted widely with the young people who avail of Bytes services. This consultation involved approximately 60 young people who are not in employment education or training (NEET). The consultation was carried out across a range of geographical locations during August and September 2014.

2.0 Consultation process

The consultation process was carried out by three members of Bytes staff, (2 youth workers and a youth mentor). It was agreed that the consultation process would be informal thus allowing participants to engage openly and honestly with the process. In order to ensure that the voices of all participants were heard consultations were carried out using small focus groups. Within the focus group settings young people were presented with a number of exercises/activities aimed at opening discussions and debate and as a prompt to enable further exploration of the topic presented.

In order to understand how young people perceived the structures, power bases and decision makers within the communities in which they lived they were presented with flash cards. Each flash card contained one from the following list and young people were asked to rate the following (from highest to lowest) according to which held the most power:

- **Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs)**
- **Community Workers**
- **Shop Keepers**
- **Church**
- **Older people**

- **Young people**
- **Ethnic Minorities**
- **Paramilitaries**
- **PSNI**
- **Media**

They were they asked to discuss what they knew and how they viewed the history of the conflict, the peace process and the growing diversity within current society and finally were asked their opinion on the removal of interface barriers as outlined in Government's Together: Building a United Community strategy.

The consultation involved young people from the following Bytes centres and outreach locations;

- **Woodlands JJC**
- **Derry Bytes**
- **Enagh Youth Forum (Strathfoyle)**
- **Short Strand Bytes**
- **Flax Foyer in Ardoyne**
- **Tullycarnet Bytes**
- **Belfast Foyer**

In order to tailor this process to the needs of the groups involved the facilitators adapted their approach based on the following;

- **Size of the group**
- **Ability of group**
- **Age range of group**
- **Location of group**
- **Time with group**

3.0 Consultation results

3.1 Group: Short Strand, Bytes Centre, Belfast.

Date: 2nd September 2014

There has been a Bytes centre in the Short Strand area for 15 years, its current location is within Short Strand Community centre and the young people who attend this centre come from the Short Strand area and fall within the NEET category. As core NEET they display many of the characteristics associated with deprivation i.e. risk taking behaviour, educational under achievement poor employment prospects and high levels of drug usage etc. Given that this centre is in close proximity to a number of interfaces the area is insular and the young people who live in this community have yet to benefit from the opportunities arising from peace.

How young people from Short Strand rated power (highest to lowest) within their community

1 Media
2 MLA's
3 Community workers
4 Shop Keepers – PSNI
6 Paramilitaries
7 Church – Older people
9 Young people
10 Ethnic Minorities

The young people in Short Strand felt that the media had the most power within their area and in particular when reporting about the 12th July and issues concerning young people. They felt that young people were always given a bad name in the press and any time the young people engaged in a positive programme/scheme etc the press showed little or no interest. They agreed that paramilitaries had little say today within Short Strand with MLA's and community workers to the fore when dealing with young people. The group agreed that young people as well as ethnic minorities had the least power although young people were listened to when standing together.

The young people showed a lack of interest in what had occurred over the years and seemed baffled when it was explained to them that individuals were searched when entering the city centre! They had little or no knowledge of their history or the history of Northern Ireland.

Regarding the peace walls, the young people said that at present there was no way the walls could be taken down as trouble would occur which would eventually lead to serious outbreaks of violence and death. Once again the 12th July and other flashpoint dates were mentioned in order to highlight the dangers if this happened.

3.2 Group: Derry Bytes Centre, Derry.

Date: 3rd September 2014

Derry Bytes centre is located within Strand Foyer, a homeless support centre and caters primarily for the Foyer residents who are 16-25 years-old. These residents are NEET young people with many complex needs and issues.

How young people from Derry Bytes rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1 Media
2 Paramilitaries – PSNI – MLA's
5 Community workers
6 Shop Keepers – Church – Older people
8 Young people
9 Homeless – Ethnic Minorities

The media were seen to be in a position of 'manipulating' the truth to suit themselves, to sell papers. The PSNI, paramilitaries and local MLA's were regarded as having equal power with MLA's being seen as one time members of paramilitary groups. Martin Mc Guinness was given as an example here. The young people said that the PSNI had power because they can put you in Gaol! Paramilitaries or dissidents have no respect but do have power in certain areas within Derry.

Community workers are well thought of as they are seen as trying to improve conditions for the young people and in particular trying to keep them out of trouble.

Shop keepers, Church and older people were seen as holding power but only with certain people, these people are of an older generation who look down on the young people but at the same time not really understanding them. The church is slowly losing its grip on power, on having a say and young people in this group have no interest in the church today.

Young people have a sense of worthlessness today; of 'lacking in confidence' one young person said that they are living with legacy of the troubles.

The homeless and ethnic minorities are regarded as having no power within the community. The young people we spoke with have no issues with minority groups as they themselves are seen as being part of a minority group as having 'no hope no voice'. Ethnic minorities were seen as having 'no voice' in the area and the young people acknowledge their hard work ethic. The group agreed on the ongoing problem with drug and alcohol misuse in their area, stating that it was at crisis point.

Can the peacewalls come down?

Derry walls seen as tourist attraction as different to peace walls in Belfast and other areas. The Diamond in Derry was talked about as being fenced in within the greater Derry area. The young people did not believe the walls could come down as trouble would occur and lives put at risk. They did however put forward ideas to change the walls:

- Cut holes in walls
- Make features of walls
- Nice murals on walls
- Keep murals relevant to area

3.3 Group: Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre Bangor

Date: September 2014

Woodlands JJC is situated on the Rathgael Road in Bangor and was built to house young offenders ranging in age from 10 to 18. Young people are held in houses are there are a total of six houses each accommodating up to six young people.

How young people from Woodlands House 6 rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1.PSNI – Local MLA's

3 Paramilitaries

4 Older People, Church
6 Community Workers
7 Ethnic Minorities
8 Young People
9 Shop Keepers

The young people who engaged with Bytes in House 6 are from areas that include Shankill, Turf Lodge, Enniskillen and Newtownabbey. Whilst it was difficult to get a definite 'ladder' of who holds the power within their area a general consensus was reached on who was the strongest and weakest within 'their' communities. In both the Shankill and Turf Lodge community workers were regarded as paramilitaries or ex paramilitaries and were not trusted. Indeed the young people said that if they could they would 'do away' with MLA's, paramilitaries and community workers such was their dislike of them.

The most powerful part of the discussion centred on the young people and how they themselves felt they were seen by the community in which they lived. There was a sense of hopelessness of depression felt by these young people with one in particular talking about spending his days taking drugs and nothing else. There is a widely held view by the young people that they do not have a voice 'outside' that they are not listened to.

There is a feeling amongst this group of being labelled in their communities; one young person gave the example of not being allowed into local youth club by the youth leader. He went on to say that if he was allowed into the centre he would not get involved in anti social behaviour.

Shop keepers, older people and ethnic minorities were seen as having little or no power within the community. This group as with others within Woodlands give a unique perspective on behalf of young people today because they are existing 'on the edge', they are to a large extent looked down upon by the police, the community and in some cases their families.

Can the peacewalls come down?

There was a general consensus that the walls could not come down as this would lead to trouble particularly around certain flashpoints, i.e. the twelfth and internment. Lanark Way was given as an example of where trouble could occur if the walls/gates were removed. One young person made the point that it should be up to those who live at the interfaces to decide if and when the walls should come down.

3.4 Group: Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre Bangor

Date: September 2014

How young people from Woodlands House 5 rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1. PSNI – Local MLA's
3 Paramilitaries
4 Community Workers
5 Older People, Church
7 Young people
8 Ethnic Minorities
9 Shop Keepers

As with house 6 the young people in house 5 had a very negative view of paramilitaries/MLA's and the PSNI. Whilst one or two within the group talked more positively of community workers there was still a doubt as to their real motives, i.e. were they a front for Sinn Fein etc? When talking about MLA's the young people talked about certain MLA's 'keeping it going' in order to gain out of it. The keeping it going was the political process and gaining was in financial terms. Whilst not as vocal as house 6 the young people in house 5 were of the view that young people as well as ethnic minorities and shop keepers had the least 'say' regarding what went on in their communities. One young person stated that it was important to highlight what rights young people had and the discussion that followed concluded that a 'programme' highlighting the rights of young people should be run in Woodlands some time soon.

Can the peace walls come down?

The overall consensus was that it was up to those people living on the interfaces to decide when it was appropriate for the walls to come down. One young person mentioned that the peace walls did not matter to young people and that it was the media who kept bringing up the issue of peace walls in order to 'grab headlines'.

Houses 1,2 and 3 in Woodlands JJC

The young people in each of these houses come from a wide range of locations and so a lot of comparative debate and discussion was generated during these sessions. Areas included; Shankill (Upper and Lower), Antrim Road, Enniskillen, Lisburn, Derry, Downpatrick, Newtownards, Ardoyne, Lurgan, Ballymena and Bangor.

One young person pointed out that the LGBT community was missing from the flashcards and this was added for that particular session. The young people felt that the Government, PSNI and Paramilitaries had the most power within communities and that they all worked together to some extent. Young people from areas within Belfast such as Shankill and Antrim road feel paramilitaries have huge control over the area "they have their own laws and can just walk about with guns." "They hide behind their masks but we all know who they are" "young people can't speak out against them or you'd get a bullet in the head" These young people also associated community workers with paramilitaries and don't feel there is anyone within their community that they can trust. The young people from Enniskillen, Lisburn and Downpatrick feel that paramilitaries don't have that level of power over their communities and that MLA's and PSNI have most of the control. The overall feeling from the young people is that they themselves feel powerless within their communities, they don't feel safe and they don't think there is anyone (apart from certain youth workers) that they can talk to about either individual issues or issues affecting communities as a whole like drug addiction and mental health. The PSNI are despised by the young people, some of whom talked about experiences of getting beat and mistreated, constantly being harassed by police for things like wearing a hoodie and Nike Air Max. The young people believe that we do need a police service but that the PSNI should be abolished and a new service put in place. They feel that nobody listens to them and that nothing is ever changes. Some stated that they would like to learn more about their rights and others felt that they would like the opportunity to speak to MLA's at Stormont regarding issues that were discussed.

Can the peace walls come down?

Opinion was split on the issue of peacewalls with those from predominantly loyalist communities stating that they should not come down as the troubles would restart. Those from predominantly nationalist communities felt that they could and should come down and people should be more integrated and not divided as it is usually the older people in the community keeping the troubles going and trying to involve the young people.

In terms of ethnic minorities the majority felt that they are 'ok' and that they don't mind if they live in the community but others felt that they "steal our jobs and houses". Almost all

felt that they had little or no power within the community and were often victimised or discriminated against.

Ideas for building a United Community:

- Give young people a voice
- Integrated education
- A new flag – get rid of all the other ones
- Northern Ireland to be its own country (not part of Ireland or Britain)
- A new police service
- Challenge the paramilitaries – remove them

3.5 Group: Strathfoyle (Enagh Youth Forum)

Date: September 2014

The Enagh Youth Forum is a youth/community provision situated within the Strathfoyle estate in Derry. Approximately 40 – 50 young people use the centre on a regular basis and they range in age from 5 – 25. The Bytes Project has been providing project work in Enagh for the past 3 years and over 40 young people have successfully completed qualifications delivered by Bytes staff during that time.

How young people from Enagh Youth Forum rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1 Media
2 MLA's - media
4 PSNI
5 Community workers
6 Church - Older people
8 Ethnic Minorities
9 Paramilitaries
10 Shop keepers



The young people in Strathfoyle talked about the issues concerning them and they are as follows;

- Cliques, if you are not related you are kept out
- Discrimination against young people
- Crime, break ins, sex offenders
- Housing lack of social housing in areas
- No good sports facilities in our areas
- Health, high incidents of cancer, mental health
- Drugs, speed, coke, meths and grass
- Integration, minority groups don't want to integrate, Romanians, Polish, Chinese, Travellers etc.
- Lack of jobs, opportunities

One young Polish person give an example of young people being nice/friendly to her in a group situation but when alone she is taunted because she is 'not from Strathfoyle'.

Regarding the issue with the peace walls the young people in Strathfoyle felt that the walls should come down when the people living closest to the walls feel it is time. This process maybe accelerated through integrated schooling, cross community projects etc.

3.6 Group: Tullycarnet Bytes Centre Tullycarnet Estate

Date: September 2014

There has been a Bytes centre in Tullycarnet for a number of years now and it is currently based in the Tullycarnet Community Resource Centre. The young people who use the centre fall within the NEET category.

How young people from Tullycarnet Bytes Centre rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1 Paramilitaries
2 Media
3 PSNI - MLA's
5 Older people - Community workers
7 Shop Keepers
8 Church
9 Young people
10 Ethnic Minorities

The discussion in the Tullycarnet centre concentrated on the power the paramilitaries have in the area. The young people provided examples of how the paramilitaries 'run' the area in which he lives. The paramilitaries he feels have 'the final say' on what happens within the area. They have the power to put people out if they so decide. The media, PSNI as well as community workers had to a lesser extent power within that area and it was mentioned that some community workers had at one time been members of paramilitary organisations. The young people acknowledged that the media did have power because they can manipulate a story to suit themselves but usually to put a negative slant on what young people are doing. Not surprisingly young people and ethnic minorities were regarded as having the least amount of power within the community. The young person stated that ethnic minorities usually kept themselves to themselves, that there was no interaction with the community as a whole.

What is good relations?
The young people felt that good relations consisted of a community helping each other out and welcoming people into their own communities.

What are the main issues concerning you in your community?
The young people struggled to come up with any issues in their own area even when prompted. They felt that there area was quite good but if they could change anything they

would have more practical activity things alongside the 3G pitch like a BMX track. They felt that the youth club was a positive thing for the younger ones but older ones 16+ had nowhere to go when they were bored but they felt there was enough provided in their community and that is up to the person to choose whether to take part. They also would like to see more job opportunities in their area and places where they can do proper paid apprenticeships etc

What are your views on the peacewalls?

The young people felt that they had to be there to stop other people fighting each other and it lowered rioting happening as much. They did not feel they were ready for them to come down as it was escalate troubles in their area.

What are your views on those from a different religion in your area?

The young people consulted felt that both communities have no respect for each other. Although they felt that they had no issue with other religions there were certain people were they lived that hated the "other" side and that then gave the estate a bad name.

What are your views of ethnic minorities living together in your community?

The young people consulted again felt that they had no issue with ethnic minorities but certain people in their area who were set in their ways did and that it would be hard to change. They talked about certain incidents in their area involving ethnic minorities that they didn't think was fair on the ethnic minority how they were being treated.

Have you any ideas on how we can work together to build a united community?

The young people personally felt that the main issue was people judging others and that they didn't give people different from them a chance. They mentioned the same minority of people who are set in their ways and expressed frustration towards this as they wanted this changed but didn't know how to go about this.

3.7 Group: Belfast Foyer Bytes Centre

Date: 20th August 2014

The Belfast Foyer Bytes Centre is situated on the Malone Road in Belfast. The Belfast Foyer is a supported housing unit for vulnerable young homeless people, residents within Belfast Foyer have multiple and complex needs including alcohol/drug dependency, mental health issues lack of support networks essential skills needs with the result that they tend to have poor health, education and employment outcomes.

How young people from Belfast Foyer Bytes Centre rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1 Media
2 PSNI
3 Paramilitaries
4 Community Workers
5 MLA's
6 Church
7 Shop Keepers
8 Young people
9 Ethnic Minorities
10 Older people

A number of issues came to the fore when consulting with the young people in Belfast Foyer, these include;

- Suicide
- Drugs
- (poor quality drugs)
- Lack of proper jobs
- Boredom
- Car crime
- Paramilitaries

The young people said that if they could they would 'make paramilitaries and PSNI go away'. They later admitted that there was a need for proper policing and that they needed to be there to keep paramilitary power under control. The young people when talking about friends who had lost their lives through misuse of drugs/alcohol said that they were not afraid of death that it was inevitable.

The young people did not really have an issue with ethnic minorities and two of the group said that they were nice people once you got to know them. One of the groups did state that they (ethnic minorities) should not be allowed to stand in the town selling Big issue. There was no issue with people from a different religion as the young people living in Belfast Foyer are a mix of all religions.



3.8 Foyer Bytes



Group: Flax Centre

Date: 19th August 2014

Flax Foyer is a supported housing unit for vulnerable young homeless people, residents within Flax Foyer have multiple and complex needs including alcohol/drug dependency, mental health issues lack of support networks essential skills needs with the result that they tend to have poor health, education and employment outcomes.

The Bytes Project have been engaging with Flax Foyer for approximately 5 years and despite the many issues these young people face once engaged they tend to be highly motivated. The age range of the young people who participated was 18 – 25 years of age.

How young people from Flax Foyer Centre rated power (highest to lowest) within their community:

1 MI5
2 PSNI – Media -Paramilitaries
5 MLA's
6 Community workers - Shop Keepers
8Church – Older people
10 Young people
11 Homeless – Ethnic Minorities

The group in Flax Foyer insisted on 'new' headings being introduced into the discussion, these included MI5 and homelessness. There is at present within Flax Foyer an awareness of the political situation within Northern Ireland at present. The group placed MI5/paramilitaries and PSNI at the top and put forward examples as to why they had done so. As it was a large group we decided to break them into three separate smaller groups in order to let the quieter ones have a say. The overall consensus was that MI5 controlled all that went on within the Ardoyne area. There was an acknowledgement that the media manipulated what went on in areas such as Ardoyne in order to sell papers with no concern for the impact this left within the communities themselves. The church and older people were seen as very much a diminishing power with young people having little or no regard for them, the church in particular.

1. What is 'good relations'?

Two parties on good terms and who can make joint decisions for the better of the community.

2. What are the main issues concerning you in your community?

A large Police presence. They follow you and pass you slowly up to 4 times in a short period of time. They stop and question you for no reason, taking your details. This can cause

problems in your area as other people in the community start asking why you were stopped and what have you been telling them.

Drugs, lack of housing, discrimination against Catholics, police intimidation.

3. What are your views on the peace walls? Do you think they could come down?

We can walk round them anyway. There's no need for them. We don't take much notice of them because they've always been there. Young people don't care about them as our attitudes have changed from our parents' time. Catholics don't care about Protestants coming into our areas but they have issues with us coming into their areas.

If they are sound they are already. 'I used to think it was ok but I lived in a Protestant area and I had an awful experience'.

4. What are your views of those from a different religion/culture living in your area?

It makes the community better with having different cultures, different faces and different people with different views.

5. What are your views of ethnic minorities living in your community?

It can only be a good thing to have the community mixed.

'I don't like ethnic minorities and don't want them in my community'.

6. Have you any ideas on how we can work together to build a united community?

Have more cross community events, exercises or residential. We all get on when were away from our communities together.

More cross community groups that would include a cross community party and cross community youth groups.

A new flag for Northern Ireland.

Other main points of concern;

- Surveillance camera's

- Dog dirt
- Lack of real jobs
- Political policing in community
- Lack of housing
- Weather (I'm trying to sort this!)

The Peace Walls Programme

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Creating Change
The Peace Walls Programme

10 October 2014

Submission to the Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Peace Walls Programme is an IFI funded project which is managed by St Columb's Park House Activity & Reconciliation Trust. The Trust was set up in 1994 to establish a centre for reconciliation and a safe venue. The centre seeks to contribute to peace-building and social inclusion through a range of programmes promoting civic participation, human rights, and democratic pluralism. In addition, the Trust manages St Columb's Park House as an income generating community business offering conference and residential facilities.

The Peace Walls Programme is based in the four interface areas in the Waterside in Derry-Londonderry and our main aim is to facilitate the removal of interface barriers. These barriers are both physical and psychological and so the founding principles on which we operate are contact, dialogue and reconciliation. This works hand in hand with the goals of physical regeneration and economic and social advance.

Our sister project is based in the Fountain and Bishop Street area in the Cityside and is managed by Triax. Together we are in the process of developing a body of research which aims to create a learning tool that can be used in interface areas. Along with an in-depth attitudinal survey, we will gather all our knowledge and experience on the ground to assess what has worked and what hasn't. We hope this will influence policy on a wider level and lead to a successful interface strategy.

We have contributed to the Submission by the Holywell Trust and would now like to add a few points which are particular to the Peace Walls element of the TBUC strategy.

ST COLUMB'S PARK HOUSE
Activity & Reconciliation Centre

The Peace Walls Programme, St Columb's Park House, 4 Limavady Road, Waterside, Derry-Londonderry, BT47 6JY. TEL: 07807275122, EMAIL: kirstein@stcolumbsparkhouse.org

INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Creating Change

The Peace Walls Programme

1. From our perspective the matter of Peace Walls should fall into two categories: Shared Space and Safe Community. At the minute it is seen as a Safe Community Aim, and while this is an important element, it is by no means the only component to the problem. The issue of community safety is ultimately why physical barriers are created in the first place but the notion of shared space runs deep into the heart of why communities are divided and why residents feel they can't use amenities in a neighbouring estate. A large amount of time by our Outreach Workers is spent dealing with anti-social behaviour in the individual estates. This is extremely important as this behaviour can spill over to the interface. This mainly involves young people so the starting point for any good relations work should always be Single Identity training and instilling respect for your own community. Gradual interaction can then build up into true friendships across the divide, as we have seen in our work with Tullyally and Currynierin. With regards to crime prevention in the areas, there is a need for work on interfaces to reduce crime as part of an informed strategy, guided by proven theory. There is a need to start where people are at and work on an agenda informed by the local community. The interface communities are by nature, the most fragmented. In time of heightened tension any adverse scenario is played out in these areas. Neighbours who rub along nicely (albeit with no contact) suddenly find themselves on the frontline. These residents bear the brunt of violence and anti-social behaviour and as such deserve special consideration.

2. What would an Interface Barrier Support Package look like? We need to know what resources would be available and what areas would fall into its remit. We need to know how our good relations work is supported by this package. Building bridges between communities takes time, money, effort and a coordinated approach. We need a long-term strategy that incorporates the physical regeneration of areas with capacity building and good relations. There needs to be recognition that the work on the physical sites is important but should be combined with a person centred approach that builds relationships of trust and helps build capacity in the area. We feel there is a lack of long term vision, strategy and funding for interface areas. This endangers the sustainability of work and jeopardises the relationships that have been formed both between the communities and with the Peace Walls workers. What has happen when the funding ends? Does the capacity programme and work disappear? If short-term funding ends then all relationships that have been built up with communities dissolve and the communities lose faith that anything will change in the long-term. The present fragmented approach to work in interface areas needs to be replaced with a proper coordinated approach. Measuring impact and effectiveness of existing work is key to developing this work and gaining credibility and funding for it.

3. Our IFI project is focused on improving the physical environment as well as encouraging reconciliation. To this end we work with all the Statutory Agencies to make sure regeneration work is carried out successfully. This is an important element to any future package. Our Programme operates with each agency working together and coordinated by us through Reference Groups and follow up work. It is clear that a prerogative must be to build community capacity, but the residents on either side of structures also need to see physical change. Whether that will be regeneration of derelict buildings or developing waste land into a vibrant shared space, all done with substantial community consultation.

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INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

Creating Change
The Peace Walls Programme

This approach has proved to be extremely successful in our interface areas. Estates that have been essentially 'forgotten' now recognise the work of the Peace Walls Programme in issues of dereliction. These physical achievements serve the dual purpose of instilling a renewed respect within communities and also instilling a trust in the Peace Walls workers that they will get concrete results.

4. It must be said that 16 years after the Belfast Agreement good relations work should still be a priority for any government. We are seeing young people growing up who have no knowledge of the conflict yet still hate their neighbours. This cannot go unchallenged or we will be picking up the pieces for many generations to come. In Derry-Londonderry we are now seen as the 'model' for peacebuilding. This is a worrisome title as it implies that we have succeeded, when in fact reconciliation is still an ongoing labour. There is a piecemeal approach to good relations work that relies on organisations to constantly seek funding with the OFMDFM and the Council offering little in the way of proper support. To this end, we welcome this 'Interface Barrier Support Package' and hope the OFMDFM have the good sense to take their lead from work that has been done on the ground.

Kirstein Arbuckle
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Peace Walls programme

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UNISON Northern Ireland

Evidence to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister inquiry into 'Building a United Community'

October 2014

UNISON represents nearly 40,000 workers delivering essential public services in areas such as health; social services; education; local government; private companies providing public services; and the community and voluntary sector.

Alongside the Committee on the Administration of Justice we are a Co-Convenor of the Equality Coalition and Board member of the Human Rights Consortium. Our extensive work to promote equality of opportunity and human rights and in support of the peace process is a matter of public record. As a trade union operating across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors our membership is a significant reflection of the diversity of NI society. Our membership also reflects all categories of groups designated under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998.

As part of our contribution to the discussion on Together, Building a United Community, we recently sponsored the two expert briefing papers written by Dr Robbie McVeigh on potential definitions for sectarianism and good relations. We also chaired round-table discussions on both papers. Those discussions were attended by researchers, academics, trade unionists, public bodies, anti-sectarianism practitioners, Equality Coalition members, the Community Relations Council, the Equality Commission and the Human Rights Commission. At both events there was strong agreement on the need for definition in both areas.

UNISON endorses the submission to the T:BUC Committee prepared by the Committee on the Administration of Justice. UNISON is clear that:

- **the proposals to turn the Equality Commission into an 'Equality and Good Relations Commission' endanger the Commission's primary function in respect of the anti-discrimination legislation and the statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity;**

- **the proposals to add a good relations section to Equality Impact Assessments risk undermining the equality duty, and**

- **definitions of 'sectarianism' and 'good relations' which draw on international equality and human rights instruments and good practice are essential.**

For ease of reference we append the CAJ submission and Dr McVeigh's final papers on definitions.

For further information contact Thomas Mahaffy, UNISON,

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University of Ulster

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER'S RESPONSE

'BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY'

The University of Ulster welcomes this opportunity to respond to the Inquiry launched by the OFMDFM Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly into 'Building a United Community'. The University of Ulster is the largest Higher Educational Institution in Northern Ireland with a long history of direct and indirect engagement with the issues of promoting peace, resolving conflict, division and diversity.

The University of Ulster was established in 1984 by bringing together a number of previously existing institutions of higher education. On its four campuses, the University and its predecessors have successfully educated more than half a million students and employed thousands of academic and other staff drawn from all backgrounds across the community at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, through access courses and lifelong learning and using a variety of technologies including distance and digital learning. The University of Ulster has always been at the forefront of efforts within the higher education sector to ensure the widest possible access to and participation. We are very proud of our record in attracting students from across Northern Ireland and beyond, reflecting the full range of attitudes, experiences and background of the community as a whole.

In contrast to primary and secondary education, the vast majority of Higher Education in Northern Ireland has been delivered through integrated institutions with a diverse staff and student population. Indeed, universities in Northern Ireland have been one of the most sustained examples of shared space and shared services, with few parallels elsewhere. The commitment of the University of Ulster to a safe, plural and tolerant educational environment was maintained during periods of extreme tension in the community and despite incidents of violence affecting both staff and students. Moreover, in recent years we have pro-actively addressed issues of good relations, most recently through a thorough revision and modernisation of the Student Union's good relations policy.

The University's active commitment to pluralism and open access is evidenced in our long record of direct engagement with, and impact on, the issues arising from division, sectarianism and conflict through research, teaching and enterprise. This has been reflected in the teaching curricula of many faculties and schools including Politics, Social Policy, Criminology, Public Administration, History, English, Languages, Theatre, Media Studies, Peace and Conflict Studies, Art and Design, Law, Education, Planning, Social Work, Community Development, Community Youth Work, Business Studies and Sport. In addition, the University has been a centre of research excellence in issues relating to conflict and diversity, establishing highly regarded institutes such as INCORE, the Transitional Justice Institute, the UNESCO Centre and the Centre for Study of Conflict as well as important academic initiatives such as ARK, CAIN website and archive, Future Ways Project and initiatives in Restorative Practices. The University's particular commitment to professional education is reflected in the wide portfolios of educational opportunities offered to professionals charged with working in and addressing issues of political and social conflict including police officers, community workers, teachers, planners and government officials. University staff members have made important contributions to public life through

their research and through direct participation in key areas of public policy such as human rights, community relations, policing and criminal justice, investigations into the past, public administration, education, housing, interfaces and community and youth work.

The University of Ulster may therefore be considered:

- A unique and unusually successful model of good practice in the provision of shared space and shared services across our four campuses in Northern Ireland,
- a leader in relation to the management of diversity and pluralism in a divided society,
- a centre of excellence in research and teaching in all areas relating to conflict, division and peace-building in Northern Ireland and beyond and
- a centre of academic and practical expertise with considerable impact on wider society.

Far from avoiding this issue, the University of Ulster has a strong record of constructive academic and practical engagement with Building a United Community. The University of Ulster therefore look forward to a long and consistent engagement with the Assembly and Executive in the development, delivery and evaluation of this policy and its goals of extending shared services and shared space.

Theory and Practice of sectarianism and peace building

Among the many contributions of staff and students in the University of Ulster to this important area of work, have been significant contributions to the theory of peace-building and reconciliation adopted by every policy initiative since 1985. The Centre for the Study of Conflict produced much of the research which supported the early development of community relations policy in the 1980s and 90s, work continued today through INCORE. In 1997, academics in the University identified the contests over Equity, Diversity and Interdependence as the core elements defining efforts to promote reconciliation in Northern Ireland. This was subsequently adopted by the Harbison Report (2002) and A Shared Future (2005) to define the scope of community relations policy and had a measurable impact on youth work, local government and the values of the Community Relations Council. In 2002, other academics at the University of Ulster worked closely with all stakeholders to produce a framework to define and measure reconciliation which had five inter-related elements:

- Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society:
- Acknowledging and dealing with the past:
- Building positive relationships:
- Significant cultural and attitudinal change:
- Substantial social, economic and political change.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER'S RESPONSE

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This was adopted to assess all applications for financial support under the EU PEACE II programme and endorsed by the Executive in 2007 through the operational plan for PEACE III.

Both the consultation on Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (2010) and the current policy (Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)) drew heavily on the work of the Life and Times Survey which has been conducted and analysed by the Universities through the ARK programme.

In addition to providing an important platform for thorough consideration of ideas and policy, the University has a long history of supporting academic engagement with practical policy- and community-focussed interventions. In many areas, such as education, peace and conflict studies, politics, community youth work, social policy and criminology, the University has been a partner of community and government in developing methods and interventions for change, evaluating and sharing best practice, establishing key networks for the delivery of policy and comparing international best practice.

The University believes that these and other intellectual and academic contributions must continue to play an important role in defining the terms of a policy to address sectarianism and racism and producing frameworks for measuring progress. Together with the detailed studies on a wide variety of aspects of conflict and peace making in Northern Ireland they constitute a considerable body of knowledge which has not yet been fully translated into policy ideas. The University looks forward to ongoing co-operation in research, teaching and professional development in this area and looks forward to practical opportunities to contribute to the development of policy in coming years.

Best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;

The opportunity to heal and repair the divisions of a society which has been so deeply divided by violent conflict as Northern Ireland is, in many ways, highly unusual. Many societies which experience this kind of enmity do not recover, but instead dissolve into tyranny or recrimination which makes co-operation impossible.

For many years, the University of Ulster has been a repository of knowledge and teaching of both local and international best practice. Over three decades, the University has been the leading centre for teaching Peace and Conflict Studies in Northern Ireland, developing courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and attracting students, holding an annual summer school for practitioners from Northern Ireland and beyond and attracting students, teachers and guests from across the world. The archives maintained by the University, the research conducted by the University and the teaching offered in the University have been at the cutting edge of developing answers to the most intractable questions. University

staff have initiated important community interventions, including evidencing problems with investigations under the Historical Enquiries Team, supporting the Department of Justice in advancing plans to remove interface barriers and facilitating talks between Police officers and political leaders held in Cardiff in 2013. Studies in housing, local government, education, policing, planning and community, important investigations into justice, human rights and equality issues and consistent professional development support for people working in complex and challenging situations have made a consistent difference to communities. University staff are also asked to contribute to policy and practice development across the globe.

Through the Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series, the universities and the Assembly have begun to develop more systematic efforts to ensure that policy and practice are informed by the most recent research. These could be extended to ensure that the important focus of transformation from a divided society is given particular attention. Furthermore, University academics will continue to pioneer new practical approaches and theoretical approaches to sharing communities and societies.

In addition to a consistent academic and intellectual output, the University has important experience of developing shared space and shared services. The University was established during the most difficult years of violence in Northern Ireland and has always been dedicated to universal and open education. As a result, all of our campuses are acknowledged as shared space.

This shared physical realm has grown from a consistent corporate commitment to an open, tolerant and plural culture. Universities are founded on the pursuit of knowledge and learning based on rules of inquiry and evidence and a commitment to consider all relevant information. The University of Ulster is guided by principles of fair access, diverse participation and membership, and a commitment to pluralism and dialogue in recognition that a university depends on the organic inter-relationship of many parts.

Staff and students share an experience that the University is open to all, and that all aspects of the University are open without discrimination. This applies to the classrooms, where all classes proceed on the basis that every student is to be treated on a fair and equal basis, to the curriculum where all students are encouraged to consider, analyse and evaluate arguments and evidence from every theoretical and social angle and to the public spaces of the University which are welcoming, accessible, of good quality and safe. The University's commitment to widening access ensures that we are constantly focussed on extending participation. Graduates of the University of Ulster are to be found in every corner of the political, professional and community leadership of Northern Ireland. Every political party and every significant social group has had direct access to the University on a fair and equal basis.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER'S RESPONSE

'BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY'

While the University of Ulster is strongly committed to promoting a harmonious working environment, we are also, and perhaps unusually, committed to fostering healthy, diverse and open debate about the most complex and difficult of topics.

The University is actively engaged with both Universities UK and Universities Ireland. Our students participate actively in both the National Union of Students and the Union of Students in Ireland. Perhaps most importantly of all, our commitment to pluralism extends far beyond the binary polarity of Northern Ireland to include students and staff from across the world. Indeed it may be no exaggeration to claim that universities in Northern Ireland represent the most important single mechanism to establish an outward and forward looking region.

The commitment of the University of Ulster to civic engagement, widening access and participation and shared space is now being extended through our most recent plans to open our new campus on one of the most important strategic interfaces in Belfast by 2018 and by our important plans to expand the number of student places at Magee. The scale of these investments and their location demonstrates the importance placed by the University on close relationship with the whole community in Northern Ireland and evidence of our determination to optimise our contribution to social, economic and cultural life. The University has already established active mechanisms for liaison with government and the local communities to ensure that the benefits of its innovative shared space has maximum benefits for those in the immediate surroundings.

The University of Ulster recognises that some of this experience is restricted to the specific context of higher education. However the clarity of purpose and values, the determination to manage and protect tolerance and the establishment of a normative culture that presumes sharing over segregation represents a body of experience which could be examined for wider lessons.

Addressing Sectarianism

The University is committed to tackling sectarianism and racism in all of its activities. While the University has no corporate policy on tackling interfaces, the skills, knowledge and capacity of many of staff in this area can be of significant value to policy development, implementation and evaluation. The University of Ulster would be keen to co-operate with those responsible for the policy to develop a significant research agenda and to ensure maximum impact on policy, especially through the Institute of Research in Social Sciences (IRiSS).

Action to remove interfaces

Three members of staff in the University recently won the support of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) to support the Department of Justice in developing a firm research base in their goal of removing interface barriers by 2023.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER'S RESPONSE

'BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY'

This builds on previous work in the University and represents a clear vote of confidence in the intellectual, policy and practical expertise of academic staff. This and other proposals will enable to make evidence-based contributions to the development of policy in coming years.

Conclusion

Finding ways to move practically from division and conflict towards sustainable good relations remains a continuing commitment for the Northern Ireland Assembly. This makes the development of a peaceful and shared society a programme in which the University of Ulster continues to play a leading role based on decades of proven commitment. We look forward to further co-operation in the practical aspects of this work in coming years. Representatives of the University would welcome the opportunity to meet with the enquiry team or to provide further detail.

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER'S RESPONSE

'BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY'

ToR of the Inquiry

The Inquiry will:

- Explore perspectives on sectarianism, division and good relations including:
  - an examination of theory and practice with regard to good relations, shared space and shared services;
  - consideration of best practice, both locally and internationally, in bringing divided communities together, and in developing shared space and shared services;
- Seek views on what good relations means and how sectarianism and division can be addressed, with a particular focus on the challenges at interface areas, both urban and rural. This might include:
  - seeking views on what issues need to be addressed in order for interface barriers to be removed;
  - examining the role of communities in policy and decision making in relation to community integration and particularly, the removal of interface barriers; and
  - consideration of the effectiveness of the Good Relations Indicators in monitoring and measuring the progress of government interventions.
- Make recommendations in order to support and enhance policy and decision-making with regard to building a united community, including on actions to tackle sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance, and to help deliver the Executive's commitment on removing interface barriers.

Women's Resource and Development Agency

Women's Resource and Development Agency

Dear Committee Clerk

The Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA) is a regional organisation whose mission is to 'to advance women's equality and participation in society by working to transform political, economic, social, and cultural conditions'. The organisation was established in 1983 and works with women's groups from all traditions in the most severely disadvantaged communities, and from urban and rural areas of Northern Ireland.
WRDA's Strategic Aims 2014-2020 are to:

- Empowerment
- Policy & Advocacy
- Tackling Inequalities
- Leadership & Infrastructure support
- Organisational Development

Our commitment to women's empowerment is most evident in our Community Facilitator training programme, which enables grass roots women to gain a Level 3 Certificate in Learning and Development, thereafter obtaining employment with our social enterprise, delivering our health programmes.
WRDA is a partner of the Women's consortium which is a regional infrastructure support programme supported through DSD and we manage the Big lottery funded Live & Learn Partnership of 14 women's centres across NI, now in its sixth year.
We work from the grass roots to the highest levels of policymaking and politics, providing advocacy and lobbying support. WRDA is a membership organisation with over 500 members comprised of women's groups, organisations, and individual members. We engage in lobbying and advocacy work, putting women's issues onto the political agenda. We manage Womenslink, the e-list for the sector (180+ subscribers) and the Women's Policy Group e-list (61 subscribers) & NI Women's Budget Group e-lists.
Over the last 2 and a ½ years the Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA), the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) and the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland have been partners in a Peace 3 project that aims to capture the experiences of women living through conflict and through the subsequent period of conflict resolution and peace building.

The aim has been to learn from the experience of women who have lived through these processes and to try to identify ways in which to make a positive impact. Over 1,000 women have been brought together on a cross community and a cross border basis and they have had an opportunity to exchange learning with women from other conflict areas through the Foundations for Peace Network.

Key issues were highlighted in different workshops which took place throughout Northern Ireland and in border county areas. These were:

- Violence, safety and security
- Decision making and representation
- Women's rights are human rights – women and social justice
- Women and the legacies of the past
- Women and institutional change
- Women making a difference

Reports were produced from the different workshops/conference & disseminated on our/partners websites & shared through social media.

- Following the conference held last October on Women-Dealing with the Past, the views expressed were discussed & relayed to Megan O' Sullivan re: Haass/O'Sullivan talks.
- The conference held in March this year titled Haass/O'Sullivan; What women think, copies of this report was sent to British/Irish govs, & OFMDFM and so far replies have only been received from the Brit/Irish govs, disappointing that our First Ministers haven't replied.
- These views were feed into & influenced the development of the Strategic guide & Toolkit which was launched at our final event 'No Peace without Women' was held in Crumlin Road Gaol on 27th June.

This guide will assist the public sector to enhance the protection of women's human rights & advance gender equality as central to building peace & development.
The Guide will also assist the realisation of the peace commitments & benefits of the Belfast/GFA by women & society generally, through the effective application of the SPIRIT & principles of UNSCR1325 on Women, Peace & Security. It is a unique guide that translates the international women, peace & security framework into a domestic application in NI/Ireland. A copy of the Strategic Policy Guide & Toolkit and briefing papers are attached.

I look forward to hearing from you and if the committee require any additional information I would be able to present some of this information in person to the committee.

Yours sincerely

Anne

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Supporting women's groups and networks across Northern Ireland

Women's Resource and Development Agency is a limited company registered in Northern Ireland. Registered number: NI22541. Registered office: 6 Mount Charles, Belfast, BT7 1NZ.

Women's Resource and Development Agency – further information

Women's Resource and Development Agency also provided a number of additional reports from workshops and conferences as listed below

- Women: Dealing with the Past Workshop - Belfast, 8th October 2013
- Women: Legacies of the Past - Clones, 3rd October 2013
- Women: Making a Difference (Cross Border Shared Learning Workshop) - Limavady, 19th June 2013.
- Women: Making a Difference – Letterkenny 12th June 2013
- Women: Making a Difference - Coleraine, 6th June 2013.
- Women: Community and Political Participation (Cross Border Workshop) - Enniskillen, 16th May 2013.
- Women: Community and Political Participation - Sligo 2nd May 2013.
- Women: Community and Political Participation - Enniskillen, 18th April 2013.
- Women: Your Community, Your Role Cross Border Workshop – Armagh 6th December 2012.
- Women: Violence, Community Safety and Feelings of Security Cross-Border Workshop - Newry, 21st June 2012
- Women: Your Community - Your Role - Monaghan 15th November 2012.
- Women: Your Community - Your Role - Rathcoole 8th November 2012.
- Women: Domestic and Sexual Violence - Newry, 12th June 2012.
- Women: Violence, Community Safety and Security - Dundalk 8th June 2012.
- Women: Violence, Community Safety and feelings of security - Derry/Londonderry 29th March 2012.

These documents can be accessed on the Agency's webpage at

http://www.wrda.net/Women-and-Peace-Building.aspx

Youth Council for Northern Ireland

YCNI Response to TBUC enquiry, October 2014.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) wish to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for OFMDFM for the opportunity to submit written evidence to the current Inquiry into Building a United Community.

In May 2013, when OFMDFM launched the 'Together: Building a United Community' (TBUC) Strategy, although not directly involved in its development, YCNI very much welcomed its intent to 'reflect the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society', and in particular its key priority to children and young people.

Youth Council for Northern Ireland (YCNI) was established in 1990, with a key function to encourage and develop community relations. Over the years a number of initiatives and review processes have highlighted the important contribution of Youth Service to the creation, development and maintenance of a peaceful society (see for example 1999; DENI, A Model for Effective Practice, 1987 (*updated 2003*); DENI, A Youth Service for a New Millennium; DENI, CRED Policy Guidance notes, 2011).

Potentially the most significant piece of work in terms of policy direction for youth service in recent times, Priorities for Youth, launched by the Education Minister in 2013, reflected the central role that youth work has to play, noting that 'equipping children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to recognise, understand and respect difference… is particularly important as we continue to deal with the legacy of the conflict and move towards a shared and inclusive society'. Within this context the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy plays a vital role in supporting youth service providers (and schools) to deliver on this area. However, the task of embedding CRED within all youth and school settings is large, and resources limited; thus any desire to draw on the skills and expertise within youth work to contribute to the wider aims of TBUC will require additional, long term resourcing.

The YCNI wishes to highlight that youth work practitioners, particularly those with many years commitment to peace and reconciliation work, want to make a direct contribution to the implementation and delivery of a strategy aimed at improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society.

The YCNI recognises and welcomes the commitment under the TBUC children and young people priority to develop a United Youth programme, and related efforts taken forward by DEL to promote co-design between those involved in the delivery of community relations based work within youth work, with those who are re-engaging young people who are not in education, training or employment (NEET). YCNI views this as an important development aimed at equipping young people who are not in education, training or employment with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to recognise, understand and respect difference as part of a wider package of support aimed at enhancing employability; and endorse the view that there is a complementarity between youth work outcomes and the key competencies and qualities identified by employers as important to employability.

The YCNI also welcomes developments aimed at enhancing the shared experience of our young people through formal education and the vital role this work has to play in continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. Voluntary sector organisations, particularly those from the youth sector, have played a key role in supporting schools to embrace this work, and have a range of skills and expertise which should be effectively utilised to achieve this aim.

The United Youth programme targets young people not in education, training or employment. This cohort make up an estimated 14% of the total population aged 16-24 (DFP, LFS Quarterly Supplement: April – June 2014, published 27 August 2014). Youth Service aims to provide services for young people aged 4-25. An estimated 29% of the total population falls into this age bracket (NISRA, Population Estimates, 2013). Whilst NEET young people are an important and vulnerable group of young people, it is notable that both peace building theory and local practice experience would point to the need for participation of all young people in efforts aimed at securing an inclusive and shared society and early intervention as modeling good practice.

YCNI also wishes to draw attention to the importance of engaging with the wider civic society in order to bring forward a peace-building strategy that not only matches the vision and aspirations of both the Belfast and St Andrew's Agreements, but the aspiration and hopes within and across local communities.

Relationship building across divided communities remains central to the process of maintaining lasting reconciliation and must underpin OFMDFM's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. Robust community consultation and transparent decision making processes will also greatly enhance confidence.

Peace-building should be positioned within a strong legislative framework, with international obligations and standards. However, tasks such as defining sectarianism or racism must draw from existing bodies of work in this area in order to avoid protracted and costly exercises which may distract from the key task in hand; which is to ensure there is on-going work to address sectarianism and racism and the outworkings of these manifestations at grass roots level.

OFMDFM's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society (including the list of practical outcomes outlined within TBUC) will benefit from a sustainable, well-resourced package and accompanying operational plan outlining the breadth and range of underpinning activity required to make each of these proposed outcomes a reality. Prioritisation of financial investment would reflect the stated political commitment to this area. Existing models of good practice should be built upon (including whole organisational approaches to embedding this work such as that modelled by the JEDI initiative (see: www.jedini.com). In addition, a regional body, at arm's length to Government, would be beneficial to securing co-ordination and ongoing challenge for peacebuilding work.

Youth Councils of Newry and Mourne, Armagh, Dungannon

Building Communities Consultation

Saturday 20th September 2014

Newry Youth Resource Centre

Groups who participated :

Newry & Mourne Youth Council

Dungannon Youth Council

Armagh Youth Council

Newry CRED Peacebuilders Group

St. John Bosco Youth Club Extended Provision

Funded by

SELB Youth Service

Southern Peace III Partnership via (*Newry and Mourne District Council staff*)

Dungannon Police & Community Safety Partnership

We at the S.E.L.B. Youth Service received notice of the inquiry into Building a United Community during the early period of September 2014.

Part of my role as a Senior Youth Worker is to support the overall development and collective action of S.E.L.B. sponsored Youth Councils in the Newry & Mourne, Armagh and Dungannon Division of the Youth Service.

All the local groups had at some time over the past couple of years spent some time exploring and debating issues of exclusion and inclusion often related to specific areas of prejudice such as Racism, Sectarianism, homophobia, and mental health stigma. Participants in our groups have quite strong feelings around these issues and a good awareness as a result of the workshops and programmes they have attended through the Youth Service.

Despite the short turnaround time, there was unanimous support across the Youth Councils that we try to react as quickly as possible and take the opportunity to have the voice of young people placed within this debate.

The Youth Councils are very much about representing the views of young people and making that voice heard as well as creating opportunities for young people to be actively involved in social action for and within their communities. What better place , than in helping to guide the future development towards the creation of a happier, more stable and healthier environment for the future of Northern Ireland.

The following notes are a collection of the ideas the emerged from a full day's discussion for the assembled groups as listed on the cover. In all thirty two young people gave of their time to attend voluntarily for a Saturday's discussion in the Newry Youth Resource Centre. Within that group were young people from new national backgrounds, GLBT people, representatives of both main-tradition and indeed those who would not claim to represent either. There were people with learning difficulties and people from all levels of education. In common, they were passionate, fifteen to twenty year olds and keen to have a say.

Our thanks to the S.E.L.B. Youth Work Staff for helping facilitate the day; Emma Devlin, Wayne Morris and Liza Hackett, but especially to everyone who turned out to speak passionately about their experiences, to share their learning, and to offer ideas for the consideration of the inquiry.

The day was made possible by the S.E.L.B.'s wonderful new Resource Centre in Newry which was given over for the day, but a special thanks goes to those other agencies who came up with funding at short notice to make it possible, Newry & Mourne staff administering the Southern Partnership Peace III fund and the Dungannon Police and safety Partnership.

All the comments made by individuals are recorded here as they came from the flip charts in each of the various work shop groups. We have attempted to draw together a summary of some main points which relate to the priorities that we asked each group to prepare during the final session of the day.

Building a United Community

One Day Consultation with S.E.L.B. Youth Representatives

Agenda for Saturday 20th September 2014

Within Stormont, a committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister has set up an inquiry to advise the Assembly and MLAs as to the best way to support and encourage the development of a truly United Community across Northern Ireland.

The inquiry is seeking submissions from interested groups and individuals that will help with this process.

Given that all forms of prejudice and discrimination have been expressed concerns of our Youth Councils and other representative youth groups, it seems important for us to take this opportunity to share our ideas and thoughts about the future development of a peaceful and inclusive Northern Ireland.

The day has been set out so that we will spend the morning sessions looking at and discussing our understanding, perception and awareness of the situation in Northern Ireland, sharing our experiences, (good and bad), and exploring what we see as the root causes for this intolerance.

Lunch is provided courtesy of Dolce Vita, including vegetarian options.

The afternoon will focus on the way forward, looking at the possible solution, the people and organisations that need to take a lead in this, and even the role we as Youth Representatives can take in delivering a better future.

During the workshops, participants will be asked to ensure all thoughts and ideas are fully recorded and priorities for each group selected and highlighted. A final report will be typed from the notes of the day to be submitted to the OFM & DFM by the 26th September deadline.

Agenda

10.00 a.m.	**Bus picks up at Perry St. Car Park Dungannon**	
10.30 a.m.	**Pickup at Armagh Bus Station**	
11.00 a.m.	**Arrive at Newry Youth Resource Centre**	
11.15 a.m.	**Introduction to today's agenda and the Open Space Concept**	
11.30 a.m.	**Select Workshops**	
11.50 a.m.	**1st Round of workshops**	**"Experiences & Sharing"**
12.30 p.m.	**2nd Round Workshops**	**"Understanding and Causes."**
1.00pm	**Lunch**	
1.45 p.m.	**3rd Round of Workshops**	**"Solutions and Approaches"**
2.30 p.m.	**Youth Service/Youth Council actions**	
3.00 p.m.	**Final feedback and priorities for recommendations**	
3.30 p.m.	**Bus**	

Education/Section7…….. ISMs

Schools need to have a mandatory and permanent commitment to educating around and dealing effectively with the issues of all….Isms (Racism, Sectarianism, Feminism, Homophobia etc.)

Schools should teach awareness of isms through LLW and sex education.

They don't address gender issues

Only cover things in a text book way, avoid seeking and offering opinions

Some Youth Groups do offer a chance to discuss and explore issues like this.

Schools should give more time to these issues and seek to create a safe environment for all.

Better use of small group workshops and discussion for this type of teaching.

Integrated schools should be talking more about these issues rather they don't have a set religion like where a Catholic school has to stick to the catholic perspective.

Causes.

No "other Nationalities" represented in School Councils

More unpopular

Nothing to do with exams and grades so schools not interested will not make time.

Schools have set religious instruction to follow

Grammar schools should be open to everyone, be more mixed

What happens to people with mental illness or leaning difficulties?

In School they are segregated, made to feel stupid and are seen as less capable.

International teaching looking to overcome language barriers

Should be more sex education and support in schools

LLW. Should be changed to other things, "Let's talk about sex…" (Depending on the teachers)

Based on youth service (Voluntary) isms programmes

Pupils could be involved in the educating….running programmes in school

In RE can teach what they want in terms of topics

At Stran. Teachers have to be taught how to deal with isms and for it to be more a compulsory part of the curriculum; make it compulsory to talk to students about certain issues.

Catholics schools, "No sex before marriage" yet there are teen mums there and they still don't talk about it as its against their religion.

Some teachers just don't have the skills to facilitate certain group activities and issues.

Can't due to education board

Teachers are not the sole blame.

Some teachers are not taught to deal with specific issues and can't meet the needs of kids.

Classroom assistants could be a source of a second opinion when appropriate.

Certain questions you just can't ask in the school environment.

Why don't parents teach kids sex education?

Sexism isn't addressed enough

Women earn less than men do.

Sexism, eg; on a date the man should pay but we feel it should be equal.

Women used to be dependent on men

Trousers for girls in schools

Teach women to see themselves as equals, do things for themselves.

Expectations of men and women in schools

Gender binary….how girls treat girls and boys treat boys.

Exploring lack of Tolerance/Education

Tolerance is a learned thing, growing up in the right atmosphere.

Integration is the key to ensuring this happens and how are thinking and learning is shaped.

Schools are not as diverse as they should be. They should be giving information on the problems in our community and how that affects us.

We need to create events that bring about integration and mixing things like Music events.

Having a one Ireland team instead of a southern one and a northern one.

Segregation "Causes"/Educating"

Lack of experience ie; exposure to religious diversity due to the area you come from influences how sectarian you can be.

Your upbringing also plays a huge part in this

Older generations had no need or will to educate, had no diversity leading to generally more closed minds.

Sectarianism is passed down to children, especially within paramilitary relations "hero/Victim"

Lag Workshops etc. Young people in Youth councils and such organisations get a better education that the majority.

Football also sectarianism brought into people attitudes through the chants.

How do we combat it?

Schools shouldn't be segregated

LLW;- learn about cultures the beliefs and thinking of other peoples.

Integrated schools, cycle developed where the lower grades are associated.

That's why people go to schools with certain religions.

RE classes;- Should they be compulsory? Religious views are not rigid

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Sectarianism.

Mix with other cultures from an early age

Might be are afraid of mixing because we don't know about our own culture.

Gay Pride parade Newry was more exclusive and less focussed on religious roots

Flags intimidate people

People jump to conclusions when they see loads of flags such as on an estate.

Schools shouldn't be all Protestant or all Catholic.

Boys and Girls should be going to school with each other (No single sex schools)

SELB doesn't have enough protestant reps for how many there should be.

See people for Who they are and not What they are!

Integrated Schools.

Racism/Immigrants and why people are angry about benefits entitlement.

A lot has to do with your upbringing.

Some black people are taught by their parents to be polite and courteous around white people and to be themselves only in black company.

We really need to challenge our own prejudices.

We shouldn't avoid the issues and we should talk about it….schools should provide workshops and there should be workshops for the parents too.

Even immigrants who have qualifications and doing jobs in N Ireland that people from NI don't want to do.

People should be allowed to speak in their native tongues in school. Some people have been given detention if they are caught not speaking English at school.

Need to challenge stereotypes.

Living with Disabilities

We feel there is a lack of understanding for people with physical disabilities

Better Job opportunities for those with disabilities

More accessible work areas

Better transport, ramps, chair and stair lifts.

Schools should provide more opportunities for students to to do GCSEs or equivalent to

Education should be more open minded

Schools should also provide more opportunities (even for those without disabilities)

Eg; tech Courses as opposed to just stay for A levels

Learn about life

Young children etc should be educated to stop bullying people with disabilities

People can make insensitive and intolerant jokes about disabled people.

Lack of education- make people think twice and make people less ignorant by facilitating workshops

Need personal advice like living with disabilities, support with bullying, support for parents to help them.

More Support and inform children everyone is different so accept everyone.

Even families who are trying to help might not understand how best to help.

School staff need more training in understanding learning disabilities and speech impediments and how best to work with and help people.

Education and support hand in hand

Opportunities for special education students to pursue GCSEs and A levels or the next best equivalent.

Racism and Immigration.

Saying people only come to this country for the benefits and the NHS is racism.

Benefits aren't evenly distributed.

Everyone has different reasons for coming here to N Ireland. Some may come for benefits but others come because they heard about work but it wasn't available when they got here so had to settle on benefits.

Some people fell that immigrants are a threat…..Northern Ireland people are very territorial.

Other Parts of Europe are more multi cultural and have been for lang periods…they are more accepting as a result and we should aim to be like this too.

NI People feel that immigrants are " Stealing the Jobs" but in reality the immigrant people are just more willing to do any work even the staff we don't want to do.

Need to give people education over time about racism and we have to challenge racism around us.

Look at America for example.

Mental Health and Hidden Disabilities. Stigma and exclusion.

Really common….much more than people think or aware.

Men won't admit when anything is wrong with them….it looks weak or they might be seen as weak.

Afraid to go to seek counselling support in school

Hidden disabilities eg ; Scared to go and be diagnosed, or not immediately obvious.

Is Narcissism a Mental health issue?

First impression are very important and you never really see who the real person is because you don't know what they are thinking.

Afraid of being treated differently

Have to report on Mental Disabilities and be reassessed…..but it is to help you in the future, but not done correctly

People tip toe around it or judge others as "attention Seekers"

People exclude themselves like to not put their problems on others or they may have a disability.

Bullied for sub-conscious self-expression e.g. using hands to talk

Incorrect use of the term OCD and the word Crazy.

People often only have one disorder but are viewed ,(or it is assumed), as probably having more.

People don't know how to approach or how to talk about the subject….even within families.

People don't show how stressed they are around the issue.

Feel you can only really talk to certain people who are in a similar situation.

Fear of the unknown then leads to bullying

Media sometimes give dramatic statistics or it is over dramatized as a condition.

Derogatory terms are offensive but it does depend who says it and how..

If you are asexual people assume you are autistic.

More education needed, it has to be spoken about openly "Workshops" schools don't get it

Is there enough about feeling stressed?

Brains a Margareta Pizza before the diagnosis, "Mental disorder adds to the person….like added flavouring!"

Homophobia….How accepting are our communities to those people who are LGBT?

Media highlights how Homophobia is still an issue.

Certain TV Shows are making steps to portray LGBT community but audience backlash (usually parents ,etc)

Less representation of bi sexuals and transgender, what representation there is of gay men and lesbian women are often stereotypical.

Bad light often shown on transgender people at times.

Local communities, more accepting than it was, however homophobia is still very present.

Sometimes it is more about a person being "different" rather than specifically homophobia.

Lack of support for young LGBT

Schools, religious schools teaching on marriage and homosexuality make it very difficult, if not impossible, for young people to approach teachers for help and support.

Attitudes of teachers as well as other pupils needs to change.

Formals….still an issue for in terms of taking same sex dates.

People still see the stereotype of gays

If you are not interested in dating than you will be seen as gay by other people.

Exclusion and Schools

Integrated primary schools then moving to Catholic High school….big difference

Protestants only come in in lower sixth

Difficulty finding out lower 6ths religions, we are afraid to ask.

Religion is a big deal in schools especially in Northern Ireland.

You are left to worry….never discuss issues in schools……no workshops.

Newry High School does cross community stuff with other schools but we are still called names because of our uniform. Protestant related abuse.

Job Search…..didn't get a job because we went to Newry HS all the jobs went to the Our Ladies girls Grammar School/Catholics obviously "nice" girls not like "High" school lot.

Newry HS Stigma, effects jobs, uni why? Because it wouldn't be highly regarded as a school like the grammar schools. Not thought to be for "Smart" people (prejudice)

In fact the results show the High school does just as well as many grammar schools.

Not Catholic and Protestant schools in N Ireland

Catholics have their own schools

Everyone else goes to the State School

Prejudice towards the Grammar and "Royal" schools…seen as POSH- Doing 3 A levels seen as stupid, only care about grades, being made to feel less.

Point systems between schools differ

You have a drop a class in you look likely to fail (Grammar & Royal)

Teachers both put in effort for grades

Unpopular people (Cliques) treated differently

Can't fix that….unenforceable

Don't include themselves.

Prefects. Choose only the popular people, doesn't involve themselves

Unfair, school doesn't see what goes on outside.

Newry HS mixed prefects up.

Formal- choose their friends for awards everyone else left out

Sacred heart Sch. …Head girl always from one class and area (Burren/Warrenpoint). Others put in hard work and get nothing to show for it

Romania trip- all HHS Students (School didn't even acknowledge it)

Elitism

Sectarianism, Should Parades be allowed, Why are so many youth clubs religious divided?

Even though you are protestant…you can still be excluded by the church you go to.

Housing and schools are all segregated here.

Communities don't interlink

No protestant Grammar Schools in Newry

Grammar schools are almost all catholic students

Names label you to a certain religion

Fear then of going into the other area or the different community. Ie a Catholic going into a protestant area or vice versa.

Even people new to Northern Ireland as new nationals find the need to learn quickly to identify people's religion by their names and surnames.

Parades……do we really need so many??

Parades can happen so that people can embrace their cultures and identities but there is no need for so many.

It costs so much money to the government and taxpayers to police these parades.

Less flags and emblems flown as these scare people. …..Fear is instilled in people because of these over the years.

Many people don't understand the parades or the difference between the religions.

Families play a major part in sectarianism….Parents telling their children not to go out with, or be friends with, the "other" religion.

Schools do not do enough to challenge this or to try to re-educate students.

Foreign nationals don't want to understand the troubles as they think it is silly…..as they can't relate.

Even collaborated lessons in schools would rather have one religion.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the age group of those present, it is not surprising that the school environment came in for significant criticism. The schools were seen as often unresponsive to exclusion issues.

The failure to react effectively was sometimes down to the religious background of single religion schools, but also down to lack of training for the teachers themselves in dealing with complex social issues.

Schools themselves were caught up in in a rivalry that has led to elitism between schools, particularly between Grammar Schools and High Schools. Unfortunately this has left some people experiencing stigma as a result of how their school was perceived by the wider public rather than the individual as a person.

The Youth Service gets reference in a positive way as the methodology of group work and the associated workshops and experiential learning does seem, to those who have experienced it, as being more effective than formal teaching methods of school when addressing exclusion issues and fostering atmospheres of exclusions. They do recognise that fewer young people will experience the youth work programmes where as everyone receives formal education.

Sectarianism remains a big issue and much emphasis is placed on the fact that the community of Northern Ireland remains very segregated, not just in Schools but in housing, Youth Clubs and socialising. Repeatedly the fact that tolerance is a learned thing and something learned from experience of growing up in mixed and tolerant environments, throws the spotlight back on communities.

Parents and other relatives have a big impact on the lives and attitudes of young people. Is it enough to focus on educating young people? Is there a need for parents and wider community to understand the impact they have in retaining old ideas of segregation and instilling prejudice?

We note with interest that new Nationals learning to live in our communities have realised the need to understand how to identify people religious and community back ground from their names and surnames.

The flags issue remains current and, interesting to note in reference s to the flags, it is always seen as a threat, an indication of danger, a way of marking divides, keeping communities apart. None saw it as a right or something to be defended or even a cultural symbol.

Homophobia has moved on a pace and people welcomed the greater acceptance experienced within the communities and a wider awareness. There is a still a long way to go but Pride Marches and greater public awareness have eased the Northern Ireland experience for many GLBT young people if to a lesser degree in bisexuals and transgender people. It is interesting to note the reference to asexual young people who also experience intense peer pressure to conform to ‘social norms’.

Disability remains with lesser understanding and the confusion or lack of understanding that means where someone has one disability many others assumed is a big frustration. Greater understanding is needed and the role of disabled people as educators has merit in further exploration.

Mental disability and illness has probably the greatest misunderstanding and remains the great unspoken prejudice. Even attempts to address the needs of people with mental issues often are misdirected and end up creating further stigma. It was great to hear young people communicating this experience during the day and in a way that only someone who has really experienced it can articulate.

With all the emphasis on equality and fairness, acceptance and mutual understanding, the issue of gender basis is still very real. The continuance of single sex schools, dress codes and education differences serves to perpetuate old myths and biases.

It is not all outward pointing criticism, the groups were all aware of the need to remain self-critical and challenge those reactions within ourselves and those of your peers.

Most importantly is the learning of tolerance through experience. It will never be enough to change the young people … the next generation. They go to school and to Youth Clubs, but they will always come back to their communities and streets and families. Our communities have to want to be part of the change and to strive to create within themselves the sort of community they want our young people to enjoy in the future.

For further information

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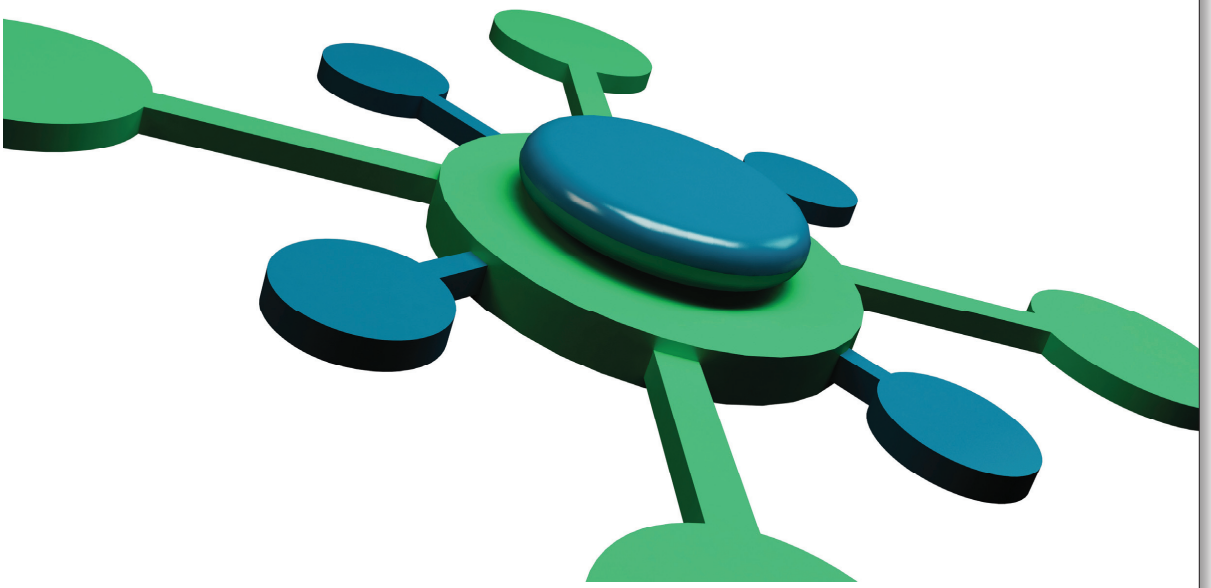
Youthnet

Youthnet
network for the
voluntary youth sector

SUBMISSION to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister for the:

Inquiry into 'Together: Building a United Community'

10 Oct 2014



1. About Youthnet

1.1. Youthnet is the voluntary youth network for Northern Ireland, an umbrella body that advocates for and supports voluntary youth organisations across Northern Ireland.

1.2. Our member organisations cover a broad range of activity for young people including: front line delivery of youth work in communities; work in rural and urban interfaces; outreach and inclusion projects; youth work programmes with young people described as NEET; and youth programmes supporting peace building.

1.3. Youthnet has been involved in the delivery of EU Peace Funds and was a Sectoral Partner for non-formal education in the Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership (YESIP) in the distribution of PEACE III funding.

1.4. Our vision is of an equitable society where all children and young people are valued, respected and supported to flourish.

2. About youth work

2.1. The key purpose of youth work is to enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential.

2.2. Youth work contributes to a young person's personal and social development by offering them meaningful activities that are based on young people's needs and interests, for example:

- leisure and non-formal educational experiences open to all young people;
- personal development or issue based programmes (e.g. health promotion, citizenship);
- outreach and detached work that engages with young people in their space;
- developmental group work in schools;

- work with excluded or at risk young people (e.g. work with young people not in employment, education or training or involved in the youth justice system); and
- one to one support on health matters and well-being.

3. Relationship building is critical for long-lasting reconciliation

3.1. Youth work supports young people to build positive relationships with others across difference

3.2. The research literature identifies the building of positive relationships as a key outcome for youth work. Evidence suggests that in a youth work context this is very often with others from different religious, cultural, or political backgrounds (see appendix).

3.3. In the context of Northern Ireland youth work has played a key role in peace-building, often during times of significant tension and violence between communities. The youth sector continues to support young people to engage in positive relationships with others across different backgrounds and to create safe spaces for where all young people can engage in non-formal education.

4. Youth work, over the years, has made a significant contribution to peace-building across Northern Ireland

4.1. A review into the community relations work carried out by the education sector (formal and non-formal) acknowledged the contribution of voluntary and community sector organisations, over the period of the troubles and beyond. The report notes that often workers were required to push boundaries and take risks that had a significant positive impact on the young people involved (DENI CRED Policy 2011).

4.2. A number of other localised reports provide evidence of youth works contribution to peace building and the building of positive community relations.

- An Evaluation of the Youth Works Pilot Programme (2014) set out to enhance respect for difference and improve understanding of young people from different

community backgrounds. The greatest positive impact reported by respondents included the fact that they were, 'more willing to co-operate with or better able to get on with others'.

- In a review of the Department of Education's Community Relations, Equality and Diversity (CRED) Policy using the Young Life and Times Survey (2012) at least two thirds of respondents felt that CRED activities resulted in more positive feelings among participants. This applied to both school and youth settings. However, the perceived level of changing attitudes among participants in youth settings was generally higher than participants in school.

- A report on the distinctive contribution of youth education projects to addressing the legacy of the conflict in NI published by Youthnet (2006) found that out of the 140 projects surveyed upon completion:

  - 89% of projects indicated that participants were had a better or greater understanding of 'other' communities in Northern Ireland, than at the beginning of the project.

  - 91% of projects indicated that beneficiaries were more willing to meet with members of 'other' communities, than at the beginning of the project.

- A report on the YMCA Connect programme (a youth work programme in east Belfast) found that young people who participated felt more optimistic about community relations and were more likely to see religious diversity as a good thing.

5. Youth work plays a key role in challenging prejudice and promoting positive attitudes towards difference

5.1. A systematic review of the research literature on youth work (2013), commissioned by the Department for Children and Youth Affairs (ROI), identified 30 studies that showed the contribution of youth work to developing positive diversity attitudes.

5.2. Youth work across Northern Ireland is underpinned by the principles of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence and seeks to provide a safe environment where young people can receive positive challenge on attitudes.

> *"Northern Ireland has a strong tradition of youth and community organisations with the skills, capacity, expertise, vision and will to dismantle barriers for young people to have the opportunity to embrace diversity, practice inclusion and enter into intercultural and intercommunity dialogue."* (Grattan & McMullan, 2010)

5.3. A report on the impact of youth work commissioned by the Department of Education (UK) found that almost three out of five young people that they talked to reported that youth work had helped them better understand people who were different from themselves (p 7).

5.4. Devlin and Gunning (2009), in a report on the outcomes of youth work, describe examples of how young people from different areas, neighbourhoods or social classes were coming together in youth settings in a way that did not (and would not) have happened otherwise (p 22).

6. Youthnet support the statement for a shared intent produced by the Community Relations Council NI.

7. Youthnet suggests the following elements are crucial to an effective peace building plan:

7.1. Building on current youth sector infrastructure to deliver quality inclusive youth work

7.2. Integrate good relations and community relations across programmes and initiatives

7.3. Develop an outcomes framework and implement good impact practice to ensure organisations can demonstrate the value of their work

8. Youthnet emphasises the importance of maintaining a focus on equality, diversity and inclusion as key elements to building

sustainable peace.

8.1. Peace building, good relations, tackling racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination should all be integrated into the content of programmes and not treated as an 'add on'.

9. Youthnet would like to see 'Together: Building a United Community' act as an overarching policy framework for sustainable peace.

9.1. There are clear links between TBUC and other government policy documents. There are also European Funding Programmes (PEACE IV and ESF) and other funding initiatives that complement the work of Government in supporting the building of peace. It is vital that there is OFMDFM as part of the *Together: Building a United Community (TBUC) strategy* produces an overarching action plan and an outcomes framework that enables all of the work carried out under these different initiatives to work towards the same aims and objectives. This must move beyond 'strategic funded programmes' and to encompass the full breadth and depth of peace building work.

Youthnet – Network for the Voluntary Youth Sector
5th Floor, 14 College Square North, Belfast, BT1 6AS
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Appendix

Overview of the research literature on youth work outcomes contributing to the building of positive relationships with others.

Working with young people: the value of youth work (2014) published by the European Commission – provides evidence of the importance of positive relationships built through youth work. The report shows how the building of positive relationships contributes to young people's well-being as well as helping to prevent anti-social behaviour (p 139).

Youth work: A systematic review of the literature (2013) commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the Republic of Ireland – examined 175 studies that provided evidence on the outcomes of youth work. Of these 66 research studies were categorised as being about young people's relationship with others. They examined the impact of youth work on positive peer relationships, positive relationships with adults, pro-social skills, leadership skills, decision making skills and empowerment.

A framework of outcomes for young people (2012) commissioned by the Catalyst Consortium and written by the Young Foundation – examines the importance of social and emotional capabilities to the achievement of all other outcomes for young people. The report identifies *relationships and leadership* as one of the key capabilities to which youth work contributes. The report provides a good evidence base which examines local and international research linking these capabilities to longer term outcomes such as educational achievement, employment and improved health.

The purpose and outcomes of youth work (2009) written by Maurice Devlin and Anna Gunning identifies the following outcomes for youth work at the social level:

- opportunities for association with others in a positive context
- strengthening bonds with existing friends and making new ones (often from diverse backgrounds)

- enhanced positive and pro-social behaviour and diminishing negative and anti-social behaviour

An evaluation of the impact of youth work in England (2004) Merton et al. – identified 'new friends' as a key outcome of young people's participation in youth work

Northern Ireland Assembly

Appendix 4

OFMDFM
Papers and Correspondence

OFMDFM request For Committee Report

Karen Jardine
Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk
Committee for OFMDFM
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

31 July 2014

Dear Karen

Inquiry into Building a United Community

At its meeting on 2 July 2014, the OFMDFM Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into Building a United Community.

The First Minister and deputy First Minister have noted the Committee's intentions, the Terms of Reference and the deadline for submission of responses. They wish to advise the Committee that they would like the opportunity to comment on the draft report before it is finalised.

I should be grateful therefore if you would forward a copy of the draft report to me as soon as it is available.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Committee response to request for Report

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Room G50
Stormont Castle
Belfast

11 September 2014

Dear Colette,

Inquiry into Building a United Community

At its meeting of 10 September 2014, the Committee considered the Department's request for the opportunity to comment on the draft Report on its Inquiry into Building a United Community before it is finalised.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to advise that the Committee would welcome any input to its Inquiry, and also advise that it will have 8 weeks to formally respond to the report once it has been finalised.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

OFMDFM T:BUC Briefing

Kathy O'Hanlon
Assembly Clerk
Committee for OFMDFM
Room 285
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

21 October 2014

Dear Kathy

Briefing – Progress with Implementating Together: Building a United Community

The OFMDFM Committee has invited officials to provide an update on the implementation of Together: Building a United Community at its meeting on 22 October.

The officials who will be attending the Committee meeting are Linsey Farrell (Director, United Community Division), Michael McGinley (Head of United Community Secretariat) and Donna Blaney (Head of United Community Policy Team).

Briefing for the Committee in respect of implementation of Together: Building a United Community is attached at Annex A.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Annex A

Briefing Paper – OFMDFM Committee - Update on Together: Building a United Community

Headline Actions

1. United Youth Programme

- The Department for Employment and Learning is leading on the development and implementation of the United Youth Programme and has established a design team to take this forward.
- Significant progress has been made on the co-design and implementation of the United Youth Programme.
- To date there has been comprehensive and detailed engagement with youth related organisations and young people themselves to ensure the programme has maximum buy-in and consensus which culminated in a United Youth Programme Design Day on 23 January 2014 in the Waterfront Hall. Almost 300 participants attended the event.
- Pilot projects will be selected to roll out in January 2015.

2. 10 Shared Campuses

- The Department of Education received 16 expressions of interest from schools.
- The Minister of Education announced the first three successful projects on 2 July 2014, a shared STEM and sixth form facilities in Limavady and two shared education campuses, one in Moy and one in Ballycastle.
- A second call for applications opened on 1st October 2014 with the deadline for submissions of proposals by 30 January 2015.
- An announcement of the second tranche of shared education campuses is expected in June 2015.
- The programme will complement work already underway and will be focussed on improving or facilitating sharing initiatives within local schools.
- A core element will be the potential for these campuses to bring together a range of schools and aid shared participation across a range of activities

3. 4 Urban Villages

- The Department for Social Development is currently working on the final design for the development of the Four Urban Villages.
- A high level design specification has been developed, the core aspects of which have been identified as:
    - o Creating community space;
    - o Improving the area and its aesthetics;
    - o Providing a range of uses within the area; and
    - o Community focus.
- The Urban Villages Strategic Board has been set up to meet on a monthly basis. It is chaired by OFMDFM Junior Ministers, and its membership includes representatives from DSD, OFMDFM,SIB and Belfast City Council.

4. 10 Shared Neighbourhoods

- The Department for Social Development is leading on this work and is developing proposals and a funding package.
- Initial scoping has identified potential sites, an indicative budget and associated timeline. To date three themes have been proposed:
- New shared social housing, (Headline action);
- Sustaining existing shared community estates; and
- Development of shared community sites for mixed use.
- The Programme will aim to create a minimum of ten new shared neighbourhoods which provide greater choices for those who wish to live in a shared community area and support existing communities that wish to become shared.
- Presently eleven potential sites have been identified which could deliver over 600 social homes.
- The department is currently exploring major missed tenure developments through joint ventures between housing associations and private developers.
- The first social housing development at Ravenhill Road is scheduled to open in the near future.

5. Interface Barrier Removal

- The Department of Justice has assumed the role of coordinator for the Programme.
- At the outset there were a total of 59 interface barriers, 22 of which were owned by the Housing Executive. Work to date has reduced this number to 53 and engagement is currently ongoing with 40 of the 53 remaining areas.

6. 100 Summer School/Camps

- A number of summer schools and camps have already taken place during the summer of 2014 and further schemes are scheduled for the Halloween mid-term break.
- An evaluation of these schemes will be used to develop 100 summer schools and camps for the summer of 2015.
- The project will involve children and young people aged 11-19, will have cross community participation and will have a significant good relations element.
- OFMDFM secured £300k in June monitoring to fund additional summer camps/schools interventions.
- Co-design workshops will be held in late Autumn with stakeholders that will test existing information gathered to date.

7. Cross Community Sports Programme

- DCAL has been appointed as the lead Department to take forward this headline action and is developing proposals for the design and delivery of a programme which will meet Together: Building a United Community's strategic priorities.
- The purpose of the programme is to use sport in a central role to break down divisions in society.

Progress with Other Strategic Commitments

Equality and Good Relations Commission

- Officials have commenced work on the development of policy and legislation that will enable the establishment of the Equality and Good Relations Commission.
- A Transition Board has been established to oversee the change management process relating to the establishment of the commission. The membership of the Transition Board includes the Chairs of ECNI and CRC, officials and representatives from DSO along with an independent member. The objective of the Board is to ensure that the T:BUC objectives relating to the establishment of an Equality and Good Relations Commission are successfully delivered.
- Members of the Transition Board are currently concentrating on exploring approaches to delivering the relevant objectives of Together: Building a United Community in advance of the new primary legislation being enacted.

Delivery & Implementation Architecture

Ministerial Panel

- The establishment of a Ministerial Panel is a central commitment given within the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.
- The formation of the Panel is critical to providing political leadership and collaborative approaches on the range of actions and commitments needed to effect change across four key areas:
- Our children and young people
- Our shared community
- Our safe community; and
- Our cultural expression.

The Ministerial Panel has met twice to date, with the intention of a third meeting being held in December.

- Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Panel have been agreed and membership has been widened to include Local Government, the Voluntary and Community Sector and key statutory organisations.
- Compositely, these sectors represent important vehicles for delivery of the strategy's actions and commitments and it should be recognised the benefits of bringing additional perspectives and experiences to considerations as the implementation phase develops.
- Representatives from NICVA, NIHE and SOLACE NI have nominated representation onto the Ministerial Panel.

Good Relations Programme Board

- Together: Building a United Community provided for the establishment of a Good Relations Programme Board comprising senior officials from relevant Government Departments who act as senior responsible owners for the various aspects of the Strategy's delivery. Programme Board meetings take place in advance of Ministerial Panel meetings and occur on a bi-monthly basis.
- The programme board has met on 6 occasions with the next meeting scheduled for 12 November.

Thematic Subgroups

- As Committed to within the Strategy, a range of thematic subgroups will be established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel to reflect the strategic priorities arising from Together: Building a United Community.
- The key role of the Thematic Subgroups is to support the Ministerial Panel in the delivery and implementation of the Strategy's actions and commitments.
- Work is at an advanced stage to establish the Housing, Community Tensions and Children and Young People Subgroups.
- Additional subgroups may be required to those outlined in the strategy and these will be established by the Ministerial Panel if considered necessary in response to emerging need.

Review of Good Relations Funding Delivery

- Together: Building a United Community gives the following commitments:

a. OFMDFM will commission a comprehensive review of the structure, delivery and impact of existing funding delivery mechanisms. The findings from this review will be used to determine and shape the future funding delivery model.

b. Ensure that funding is directed in a way that secures sustainability of the infrastructure that has been established at a local level and that continues to develop the capacity of individuals and organisations working to build good relations across our society

c. We will work to map out the trends and patterns that have emerged as a result of investment in community relations activity from sources such as Peace funding and the International Fund for Ireland. This will also help to identify the gaps in provision and to highlight where further investment is required.

d. We will review practice across all strands of good relations activity, including those projects particular to young people.

- The Department engaged the Strategic Investment Board to take forward the funding review in two phases. (a) Phase 1: Review of current funding schemes and delivery and (b) Phase 2: Development of funding delivery model
- The focus of phase one of the review, which was completed at the end of March 2014, drew upon existing evaluations and reviews to identify:
- emerging themes across the range of funding mechanisms and programmes;
- the key issues;
- potential gaps in knowledge; and
- key learning points and recommendations.
- Building on this information, phase two involved substantial stakeholder engagement.
- The second phase of the review also explored how good relations funding could be aligned with the strategic priorities of Together: Building a United Community.

The second phase was completed at the end of June 2014. Officials are now working with SIB to finalise the report which will make recommendations on a future funding delivery model and enhanced management of existing programmes. Further engagement with stakeholders will take place following Ministers' consideration of the report.

OFMDFM response re T:BUC

Office of the
First Minister and
Deputy First Minister
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Kathy O'Hanlon
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Committee for OFMDFM
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BELFAST
BT4 3XX

19 November 2014

Dear Kathy

TOGETHER: BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY - FOLLOW-UP TO OFMDFM COMMITTEE BRIEFING ON 22 OCTOBER 2014

The Committee for OFMDFM had requested further information on a range of issues following the appearance of officials before the Committee on 22 October 2014, to provide an update on progress with the implementation of Together: Building a United Community.

Clarification on those issues has been provided below:

Evidence Papers to the Committee

There is a range of internal departmental processes through which officials have to go before papers can be issued to the Committee. Together: Building a United Community is a particularly wide-reaching area which requires inputs from a range of departments. All of these factors can impact on the timing of issue of papers.

Shared Campuses Programme

There is no agreed **specific budget for the 10 Shared Education Campuses Programme**. All figures provided in response to requests for financial profiling for expenditure are indicative. Potential costs for the whole Programme will be dependent on the complexity and size of proposals submitted and successfully selected. Even then exact costs for each individual project cannot be determined with any degree of accuracy until these projects have completed their technical feasibility studies and business cases. It is estimated that around

£30k of resource funding, which will be met from the Department of Education's existing budget, will be required in the 2014/15 financial year to cover these costs.

The resource costs of developing Economical Appraisals for projects approved from the Second Call will commence in the 2015/16 financial year and could be in the region of £200k, assuming 7 projects are successful in the second Call.

The 13 **applications not successful in the First Tranche** were provided with feedback. They were advised that the Department would be launching a second Call for Expressions of Interest in the new academic year and, if the applicants felt that they could address the issues raised as part of the assessment process, they could resubmit a revised proposal at that time.

A number of the schools whose projects were not selected in the First Tranche have been working with and receiving support from their respective Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) in the development of a possible application to the Second Call.

The first three shared campus projects are now in the early stages of planning. Each scheme will require the completion of a Feasibility Study and an Economic Appraisal. Only after approval of the Economic Appraisal, and subject to available capital funds, will the project proceed to tender and construction.

- **St Mary's High School, Limavady and Limavady High School** - this project will provide 2 new shared facilities – a shared sixth form centre on the St Mary's school site and a shared Stem (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) centre on the Limavady High School site. The two shared centres may be joined by a bridge, using Peace IV funding secured by the local district Council.
  The Western Education & Library Board is currently working on the Feasibility Study for this project and along with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the other school Managing Authority, will use this information to inform the preparation of the Economic Appraisal.

- **Moy Regional Controlled Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy -** the proposal is to build a single school on a new site to accommodate both Moy Regional PS and St John's PS. Whilst each school will retain its own distinct ethos and identity, it is envisaged that the two schools will share facilities such as the multi-purpose hall, play areas, library and ancillary accommodation.

  Land & Property Services is currently undertaking a site search for the new campus which is expected to be completed soon. The Southern Education & Library Board will then undertake the technical feasibility work for the sites identified and working with both the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the Department of Education and will use this information to inform the preparation of the Economic Appraisal.

- **Ballycastle High School and Cross and Passion College, Ballycastle.**
  The proposal is for 2 new core schools and 2 shared centres, one for STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects and one for Performance and Creative Arts at Key Stages 4 & 5. Consideration is being given to the possibility of an enclosed 'walkway' or bridge joining the two shared centres.

  Given that this proposal is for major works (ie 2 new core schools as well as the two new shared facilities), the project requires detailed consideration and planning. Department of Education officials are actively engaging with the North-Eastern Education & Library Board and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) who are the two Managing Authorities involved.

  Urban Villages Programme

  Ongoing stakeholder engagement will help to inform the final decision on the geographical area to be included within the boundaries of the Newtownards Roard urban village.

Shared Neighbourhoods Programme

The following 11 schemes were shared with OFMDFM officials as 'markers' for the creation of 10 shared neighbourhoods. The final list of 10 delivered schemes may look somewhat different.

New Social Housing Shared Neighbourhoods	Estimated Units
Ravenhill Road (Phase 1), Belfast	67
Felden Mill, Newtownabbey	97
Ravenhill Road (Phase 2), Belfast	86
Harmony Hill, Lisburn	12
Former PSNI Station, Crossgar Road, Saintfield	23
Sunnyside Street, Belfast	27
Lanyon Plaza, Belfast City Centre	49
Killard, Newtownards	79
Ashgrove Avenue, Newry	64
Downpatrick Road, Killyleagh	14
Former Dunmurry High School, Dunmurry	90

The Department continues to work with NIHE and the Housing Associations to identify further sites which may be suitable for this programme. Identifying an over commitment of sites allows the Department to manage delivery risks should some schemes fail to come to fruition due to issues such as land purchase, planning permission or community consultation which are often barriers to building projects.

Summer Schools/Camps Programme

OFMDFM initially provided funding totalling £400k for summer interventions in 2014, delivered by Belfast City Council - £100k (BCC) and the Department of Education - £300k (DE), through the Education and Library Boards (ELBs). 124 summer intervention schemes were delivered during the summer of 2014, 82 by ELBs and 42 by Belfast City Council. These are listed separately at **Annex A.**

Following additional budget allocation from June Monitoring, a further £180k was allocated to DE, £70k to BCC and £55k to other local Councils. This will allow them to run further schemes/pilots before the end of the year.

An ongoing independent evaluation of all these interventions will identify those which may have key features of a summer school/camp and the findings of that evaluation along with a series of co-design workshops will be used to inform the final design of the 2015 programme of summer schools/camps programme.

Delivery Plans

We are currently working with Departments to finalise financial information and implementation plans and will share these with the Committee when we are in a position to do so.

Review of Funding

As advised at the briefing on 22 October, officials are working with the Strategic Investment Board to finalise the report on the delivery of funding. Following Ministers' consideration of the report, further engagement with stakeholders will take place and we will arrange to forward a copy of the final report to Committee members at that stage.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Education & Library Board Summer Intervention Schemes 2014

ELB	Youth Group	Allocation	Summary
SEELB	Peninsula Healthy Living	£2,000	To offer diversionary activities to young people who have been identified by partner agencies as being involved in or at risk of sectarian, racist or civil unrest activities.
	Dreamscheme NI	£2,000	To divert young people from sectarian behaviour, civil unrest and crime (especially violence and drug related crime).
	East End Residents Association	£1,285	To promote good relations and work to decrease anti-social behaviour with young people from East End Estate.
	Tonagh Neighbourhood Initiative	£1,400	To engage young people in positive activities and direct them from anti-social behaviour or criminal activities.
	Logic Café	£2,000	To reduce the risk of young people becoming involved in sectarian activities, civil disorders and other crimes.
	Dunmurry Community Association	£2,000	To work with young people deemed to be at risk and engage them in arts and photography project.
	North Down YMCA	£2,000	To enable young people from a range of backgrounds and who are at risk of offending, to engage and participate together in positive and developmental activity.
	Millisle Youth Forum	£2,000	To provide the young people of Millisle with alternative Saturday night activities that will reduce the opportunity to become involved in underage drinking and anti-social behaviour.
	Seymour Hill & Conway Youth Council	£2,000	To engage young people who have been identified by community representatives and the PSNI as being vulnerable to sectarian and anti-social behaviour via a range of activities.

OFMDFM Papers and Correspondence

BELB			
	Ballymac Friendship Trust	£3,900	4 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August.
	Inner East	£2,000	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Participation in a residential removing young people from local area.
	Ledley Hall Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July. Participation in a residential removing young people from local area.
	Doyle Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July. Participation in a residential removing young people from local area
	Finaghy Youth Club	£3,100	4 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July
	Nubia Youth Club	£5,900	3 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July. Participation in a Cross Community residential to Corrymeela
	Charter Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Outreach work at bonfire sites. Some joint activity with St Malachy's YC.
	Suffolk Youth Club	£3,900	3 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July/August. Cross Community work with Interface Group
	Donegall Pass Youth Club	£3,900	Engagement with Lower Ormeau and Markets on joint planning. Diversionary programmes during July and August.
	St Malachy's Youth Club	£5,900	4 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July. Participation in a residential removing young people from local area
	St John Vianney Youth Club	£5,900	4 week centre based YIP activity and out-centre diversionary programme during July. Participation in a residential removing young people from local area.

	Hammer Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Cross Community residential to take young people from local area.
	Fortwilliam Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Cross Community residential to take young people from local area.
	Mountcollyer YC	£5,900	5 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Residential to take young people from local area.
	Ardoyne Youth Club	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Cross Community residential to take young people from local area.
	John Paul II Youth Club	£5,900	5 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Cross Community residential to take young people from local area.
	Holy Family Youth Centre	£5,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Residential work to take young people from local area during August.
	New Lodge Youth Club	£5,900	5 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Cross Community residential to take young people from local area.
	Willowbank Youth Club	£3,900	4 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August.
	St John's Youth Club	£3,900	4 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August.
	Clonard Youth Centre	£5,900	Outreach work with young people. Cross Community programmes, residential at Delamont and 4 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August.
	St Peter's Youth Club	£5,900	5 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Residentials in Castlewellan and Newcastle

	Divis Youth Project	£3,900	6 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Residential to take young people from local area.
	Forth Spring Inter Community Group	£3,000	4 week centre based YIP activity and diversionary programme during July and August. Residential to Ballintoy.

NEELB	New Mossley YC	£1,600	A total of 16 YP participated in a sporting initiative looking at Racism and Sectarianism in football. The group engaged with the PSNI to facilitate workshops around the theme of anti-social behaviour and the impact of Racism and Sectarianism in the community. The group were also involved in a residential to Manchester with the Cubs For Young People.
	Larne YMCA	5296.12 inc staff	Targeted group on YP who come from areas of disadvantage in the Larne area. There are 2 strands to the project. Involves a group of Peer Leaders engaging in Community Relations training over 2 evenings in July. The group will then engage with 30 additional YP in the community looking at the impact of good community relations. They will also be planning a residential in Aug for the YP to attend.
	The Grange Comm YC	5368.7 inc staff	Grange Community YC is working with a total of 47 YP aged 12 to 18 yrs. On a number of accredited training courses which include Choices Programme and the 'Bout Ya' Project including a Level 1 Sports Leaders award. Then project will be delivered over afternoons and evenings. Opportunities will also be provided to engage with The Peace Players Basketball initiative and the WOMAD programme on the theme of community relations. The YP will also participate in a 5 day residential programme to the Benone Complex to engage in the Surf Academy.
	Whitehead YC	3000 inc staff	A total of 40 are targeted to get involved in a series of workshops with the support of the PSNI addressing sectarianism, racism, and anti-social behaviour on a Sat evening .They will also get involved in community projects to help change the perception of YP in the wider community. Employment skills training will also be offered to those YP likely to be leaving school with little or no qualifications. The YP will also attend a 3 day Inclusion Residential in Tollymore Forest Park with the NEELB SYW for Inclusion.
	Waveney YC	£5,218.09	This programme was aimed at both regular attenders and those that did not engage with the unit. The unit is located in the Ballymena North area of Ballymena and the Doury Road Estate that forms the main route through it is one of only six projects being developed under DSD's 'Building Successful Communities' Tensions high throughout the 12th period between the local population and main population in surrounding Ballymena area. The programme ran from the 30th June to the 14th July, including the 12th, 13th (normally Stat holidays) and provided activities during the day and in the evenings up to 10pm

	Trekkers	5200	This project targeted YP in the Glengormley Area to engage in a 6 day residential experience to Bushmills leading up to the 12th July as there is normally trouble around the Town Centre during this period. A total of 31 YP attended the team building trip which also looked at the impact of anti- social behaviour of YP on their community.
	Bridge YC/Church of the Nazarene	750	Is located in an area of high deprivation in Carrickfergus linked to a local Church Premises. Targeted mainly at the younger age group, the purpose is mainly diversionary and involves the delivery of an activity programme over 3 weeks in the summer
	Rathcoole YC	2948	This project is being delivered over 3 evening a week during July and Aug for 35 YP. The project is to develop a 6 week Identity Project which aims to challenge YPs prejudice and labelling of others from a different background. YP will also be involved in a number of trips taking them out of their comfort zone.
	1st Carrick Presb YC	1734	Located in the heart of Carrick and has been impacted badly by the recent flag protests in the town. The Group engaged with over 100 YP during 1 full week from 11am to 11pm. The programme is primary diversionary with one off site trip.
	Millgreen YC	916.8	Many of the YP who attend the club feel isolated and hemmed in as the only Catholic Area in a mainly protestant location. Tensions are heightened at this time of year. The club hopes to target 20yp up to age of 18 and deliver practice around the themes of identity and difference. They will be visiting key historical sites to explore N Irelands history as part of the off- site programme.
	Sunlea Youth Centre	£5,989	Unit is situated in the Cross Glebe Area in Coleraine. Ranked 53 on the Multiple Depravation scale. High levels of 'single parent' families, low level qualifications and high unemployment. Strong Paramilitary influence in the area, tensions high due to recent punishment attacks and run up to 12th celebrations. The programme targets a group of 25 young people aged 14 -18, over a weeklong residential leading up the 12th. The programme will focus on: Consequences of poor decision making, Building Positive relationships, dealing with peer pressure, socialising safely over the 12th and using outdoor activities to help team building and leadership skills,
	Antiville Community Group	1960	Is situated in an area of disadvantage in the Larne area. The programme is mainly diversionary in nature targeting 33 YP. The programme is predominantly activity based with a number of off-site trips.

	Millbrook YC	1970	The club is situated in an area which has very little other provision for YP and lies on the outskirts of Larne town. The programme is mainly activity bases with the YC being available to YP over 3 evenings in July and Aug.
	Ballykeel YC	£3,205.45	Programme engaged a group of young girls at risk of involvement in antisocial behaviour and had them participate in a 4 day residential experience. The focus was on encouraging tolerance and diversity. The group created 'mural boards' for display outside the local youth centre based on their experiences.
	Crumlin CIG	£5,631.61	The programme will combine diversionary and developmental elements i.e some of the programme will consist of evening activities in the area which aims to redirect the young people to more positive social experiences in their own area. And then some of the activities will be outside of the area to encourage the participants widen their horizons and engage in positive experiences which we hope will spark an interest in more positive social outlets.

WELB	Ballymagroarty Hazelbank CP	£2,615.00	Unit is delivering a programme with 20 young people in the a 7 week programme with a range of diversionary activities and a residential on days of potential community tension.
	Ballymagroarty Youth Club	£2,840.40	Delivering a programme with 20 young people during July and August with diversionary activities and a residential.
	Bishops Street	£2,700.00	Unit are targetting young people at high risk of being involved in community tension on interface. Unit spend time at interfaces at encourage young people to participate in diversionary activities rather than engage in criminal activity.
	Cathedral Youth Club	£2,960.00	A range of summer activities within the Fountain area to promote peace at the interface. Programme also removing young people from the area during key times of potential unrest.
	Creggan Neighbourhood P/Ship	£2,781.32	Unit delivering a developmental programme, diversionary activities and a residential at key times of community tension.
	Curryneirn Senior Members	£2,646.25	Unit delivering a programme focusing on drugs and alcohol, diversionary activities and a residential at key times of community tension.
	Dove House	£2,877.10	Programme is highlighting the history of bonfires, and providing a range of diversionary activities, including a residential at times of potential unrest.
	Irish Street	£860.00	The Programme plans to improve community safety matters through active participation in activities and delivery of educational workshops looking at issues relating to anti social and risk taking.
	Long Tower	£3,000.00	Unit will engage 38 young people in diversionary activities and a range of group work sessions highlighting dangers of involvement in anti social behaviour and sectarian violence.
	Pilots Row YIP	£2,677.88	Delivering a programme with 26 young people highlighting impact of rioting on young people and residents in local community with residentials during the two main marches.
	Rosemount Youth Club	£2,571.08	Unit will engage 40 young people in an Anti social behaviour programme to include drop in sessions, groupwork and trips away.
	St Mary's	£2,781.32	Unit will engage 50 young people tackling issues such as the culture of rioting and reducing tension by diversionary outdoor activities, interactive workshops, role plays and a residential at a key time.

	St Mary's Matchbox	£2,781.32	Unit will engage 40 young people tackling issues such as the culture of rioting and reducing tension by diversionary outdoor activities, interactive workshops, role plays and a residential at a key time.
	Whistle Project	£3,000.00	The programme aims to enhance knowledge and develop attitudinal change towards cultures and traditions using workshops and a residential
	CAW	£2,989.60	The programme will engage 35 young people in a personal development programme encompassing themes such as cultural identity, sectarianism, paramilitaries and anti social behaviour to include a residential and educational visits.
	Limavady NRA	£2,998.78	Unit will engage 40 young people in diversionary activities and a range of developmental activities during times of potential unrest.
	Londonderry YMCA EP	£2,273.67	Delivering a programme with 20 young people for two weeks in July known for heightened anti social behaviour with active workshops and activities.

SELB	Spring	£2,150.00	Workshops and residential for targeted young people
	Newry, Carnagat Area Youth Worker	£2,983.00	Reaction to work with Local policing partnership
	Coalisland South Area Youth Worker	£1,204.13	Diversionary work with targeted young people
	Cabin Club	£3,000.00	Planned diversionary activities at time of heightened social unrest
	Clann Eireann	£2,955.26	Disengaged yp on-site and off-site activities and residential
	Drop Inn Ministries Youth	£2,957.71	Diversionary work, day trips, workshops and residential
	Drumgor Youth Centre	£1,462.74	Workshops, activities and residential
	Fuse Youth Ministry	£3,000.00	Diversionary activities and residential
	Links Youth Work Project	£2,993.49	Detached work, workshops, diversionary activities and residential
	Lurgan YMCA	£2,990.42	Diversionary activities, camping and outdoor education
	Craigavon Intercultural Programme	£3,000.00	Diversionary activities and workshops
	St Mary's Youth Centre	£2,993.95	Diversionary activities and residential
	Taghnevan Youth Club	£2,920.00	Workshops and residential
	Tullygally Youth Centre	£2,414.86	Workshops and residential
	Portadown YMCA	£1,997.91	Diversionary activities, workshops and residential
	Drumbeg North & South Residents' Association	£3,000.00	Diversionary activities, workshops and residential
	Meadowbrook Residents' Association	£3,000.00	Diversionary activities

Belfast City Council Summer Intervention Schemes 2014

Ref No	Name of Group	Project Name	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended	Description
3782	Blackie River Community Group	Summer for all	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	The summer intervention programme which we aim to run will be at times of highest tension within the Greater Falls Area and the surrounding interface areas (such as Broadway). The summer programme will have educational, social and recreational activities attached to ensure young people build their capacity and also have a fun experience.
3798	Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership	Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership	£4,700.00	£3,000.00	We aim to roll out a bonfire reduction programme that will work with a group of 40 young people from the Clonard area over the summer to reduce the potential for an August bonfire. As a result there would be a big reduction in interface tensions and ASB in the Clonard area.
3732	Colin Glen Trust	Colin Youth Summer Programme	£4,960.00	£2,500.00	This project aims to engage with young people at risk of becoming involved in conflict in the areas surrounding Colin Glen Forest Park. The programme will bring young people from these areas together to participate in activites over a 6 week programme including the Colin Glen Youth Summer Scheme.
3942	Concerned Residents Upper Ardoyne	Youth and Community Programme	£4,060.00	£1,500.00	This project will provide a week long programme of fun, productive and safe activities during the month of August 2014 for young people between the ages of 18-25 from the Upper Ardoyne area. The project is key for the diversion of local youth from the Ardoyne interface.
3777	Crosscollyer St Evangelical Presbyterian Church Sunday School	Crosscollyer Church Summer Scheme	£1,700.00	£1,000.00	To divert kids from interfaces through provision of a summer activities week and a range of residential camps at peak times of unrest and potential trouble.
3808	Crusaders Youth Academy	Crossing the Line: Diversionary Football Programme	£4,416.00	£4,116.00	An interactive sports initiative promoting good relations and smart life choices amongst young people. It includes a cross community football training programme (with good relations training) and a football tournament. It offers diversionary activities to young people at a time of heightened tensions to reduce anti-social behaviour and promote good relations.
3869	Dean Clarke Foundation	Youth Intervention Project	£3,274.00	£2,000.00	The Dean Clarke Foundation Youth Intervention programme will engage with young people at risk of getting involved in violence at the interfaces, with a view to reducing tensions in the area.

3584	Fairhill Community Association	Summer Festival	£4,020.00	£500.00	Our aim is to keep our local youth in the area to divert them from anti social behaviour in and around the marching season. Due to the lack of infrastructure this programme will be for both sides of the community. There will be team building activities throughout the day.
3857	Falls Youth Providers	Safer Community through Youth Diversion	£5,250.00	£3,000.00	The project will provide a wide range of diversionary activities for young people to attend during times of heightened tensions in the local community and surrounding interfaces.
3618	Fortwilliam & Macrory	Fortwilliam and Macrory Presbyterian Youth Diversion Project 2014	£3,742.00	£1,771.00	A project that will offer young people living in interface areas an alternative to engaging with conflict and anti-social behaviour. Through providing diversionary programmes, our aim is to give young people opportunities to develop confidence, build resilience and reach their full potential.
3954	Gleann ABC	Bringing communities together through boxing	£5,000.00	£2,000.00	We will provide 10 underprivileged youths (aged 12-16) from both Gleann ABC and Cairn Lodge ABC with a training and development programme over the marching season, which will also include a residential trip to take people out of the local environment at a fractious time of the year.
3834	Glen Community Parent and Youth	Lenadoon Neighbourhood Summer Intervention scheme	£4,900.00	£3,400.00	An 8 week scheme programme running over the months of July and August offering young people from the Lenadoon/Suffolk interface educational and recreational activities and structured trips and activities.
3772	Gort na Mona Sports Association	Gort na Mona Summer Camp	£3,600.00	£2,000.00	5-11 yr olds and 12-17 yr olds in the Upper Springfield Ward will participate in a mixture of indoor and outdoor activities that will last for 2 weeks, split over the Twelfth week and the Bonfire week.
3894	Greater New Lodge Youth Forum	New Lodge Youth Diversionary Programme	£1,686.00	£1,500.00	The project will provide diversionary programmes and activities for young people from the Greater New Lodge community at times when there is heightened tension in areas where interface violence is most likely to take place.
3691	Greater Shankill Prop Dev Co	Mutual Understanding through Murals	£4,830.00	£4,830.00	This is a pilot project initially engaging Protestant young people in interface areas in a 2 week arts workshop producing mobile murals which focus on social history, industry, school years and families and not on sectarian imagery/text.
4008	Greater Village Regeneration Trust	Zit2Fit	£5,000.00	£2,500.00	The delivery of a physical activity programme for the young men and women of the Village and Sandy Row area, in the afternoons and evenings. Specifically designed to create awareness of local community based facilities and resources that youths may not be aware of or utilise because of local tensions.

3538	Interaction Belfast	Interaction Belfast	£3,927.00	£2,827.00	Interaction Belfast is a community development project. We were established in 1988 by 2 former combatants (a republican and a loyalist) who recognised that if we were ever to break the cycle of violence then the Shankill/Falls/Springfield Roads, communities would need to start communicating with each other. We promote, encourage, enable and facilitate the building of positive relationships through dialogue, on a cross community and intra community basis.
3640	Loughside FC	Loughside FC - Youth diversionary and education programme	£4,592.00	£4,592.00	We will run a week long programme aimed at approx 640 young people from all sections of the local community to participate in a football and physical activity related programme during a time of heightened tension. The project will also include education through workshops on key issues in the area.
3895	Loughview Community Action Partnership	LCAP Summer Intervention Programme	£5,020.00	£4,020.00	LCAP forum will work with 120 young people during the summer months. Steering the participants away from negative interface activity and ASB. We will be working with Fortwilliam Youth Club and the Basement Youth Club to deliver a range of intervention/diversionary programmes at a time of heightened tension.
3621	Lower Shankill Community Association	Have your SAY (Shankill and Ardoyne Youth)	£3,817.00	£3,551.00	"Have your say" will build on the CHASM Intervention Programme by bringing young people from the Unionist Lower Shankill and Nationalist Ardoyne areas of North Belfast together to participate in diversionary and relationship building activities and explore those common issues which affect their everyday lives.
3760	Markets Development Association	Markets Summer Intervention Project 2014	£4,695.00	£2,500.00	The Markets summer intervention project is aimed at reducing interface violence and antisocial behaviour during contentious periods throughout July and August. This project, which is a continuation of previous years, intervenes with interface violence by reducing the opportunity for it to occur by providing positive alternative activities.
3689	New Lodge Arts	Don't duck and run	£5,000.00	£4,556.00	The project will provide a range of activities for different age groups of young people (9-11 yrs, 12- 17 yrs) from the Greater New Lodge through targeted intervention from 10th - 15th July - a week when the temptation for young people to participate in sectarian violence at interfaces is at its highest.

3965	Newington Youth FC	Newington Summer Diversionary Residential and Soccer programme	£5,000.00	£2,500.00	Young people linked to the club and from the local area in North Belfast will engage in a Good Relations based residential programme over the 11th-12th July which aims to improve future relations in the area. They will also take part in a 2 wk fun summer soccer programme.
3972	No Limat	Summer Jump	£4,990.00	£2,000.00	No Limat will deliver a project throughout the duration of the Summer (8 weeks in total). The project will centre on providing diversionary activities for at risk young people during times of heightened tension and interface violence. The theme of Urban Sport and Urban Life will act as a hook to engage participants.
3581	Norman Whiteside Sports Facility	NWSF Summer Scheme and Sports camp	£3,900.00	£2,500.00	The project is a 7 week summer scheme running through July and August when the young people are off school. This will involve a number of different sports being taught and outside activities.
3882	North Belfast Interface Network	Summer Intervention Programme	£4,105.00	£3,500.00	To create a series of strategic diversionary activities during the most contentious dates over the summer months to engage young people most at risk from or affected by interface tensions, contentious parades and risk behaviour. This programme reflects a key element of an over-arching summer intervention strategy. This coordinated effort has identified key dates and put in place diversionary activities providing positive alternatives for young people.
3806	North Belfast Play Forum	A Safer North Belfast this summer	£2,610.00	£2,500.00	The NBPF Summer Intervention programme is twofold, a 5 week community summer programme for young people aged 6-21 yrs. For 3hrs per day activities will take place in the Waterworks facility for young people of all ages. Interaction sessions and diversionary work over the summer will direct young people away from the interfaces. Also included in the programme is a diversionary fun-day on 12th July to detour young people from flashpoints and interfaces. This will be held at the Waterworks sports facility in conjunction with over 12 local community groups.
3960	North Belfast Womens Initiative & Support Project	The Share Centre Residential	£3,600.00	£1,750.00	NBWISP will provide a summer residential programme for young people aged between 12 and 18 at the start of August to take them out of Upper Ardoyne. The residential will take place from Friday to Sunday catering for 20 youths and 4 staff members.
3748	Rivers Community Project	STREETREACH	£2,250.00	£1,550.00	

3646	Roden Street Community Development Group	Future Youth	£5,000.00	£3,000.00	Future youth is led by young people in the Grosvenor/Roden street area enabling genuine buy in to society over the vulnerable summer period. Future youth is direct and diversionary but will enhance development of longer term youth management capacity. Engages acutely excluded young men and women and generate positive profile of the area via youth organised weekend events.
3979	Seaview Enterprises	Seaview Enterprises 'Four weeks of fun'	£5,000.00	£2,500.00	Four weeks of fun will provide an important diversionary programme for young people from divided communities in North Belfast. The programme will unite residents from areas such as new lodge and tigers bay in activities which they share common interests within, and which distract them from interfaces during hostile periods.
3783	Shankill United FC	Summer Youth Diversion	£5,000.00	£1,500.00	We would like to recruit 128 young adults aged 16-21 into a 6 week project that will be held Mon- Thur during July and August. We will use the sport of football as a tool to capture their interest and deliver educational workshops to reduce risk.
3856	Short Strand Community Forum	Leading the Way	£5,280.00	£2,500.00	We,as in the previous 2 years, wish to provide an innovative programme which will have young youth leaders providing leadership to the young people who are engaging in disorder at the interfaces. This has now become an annual programme of activities.
3709	Southcity Resource and Development Agency	Summer Intervention Programme Youth	£5,000.00	£3,640.00	Southcity wish to promote an intervention and diversionary programme including outreach work to involve young people not engaged in regular youth provision and who could be at risk of becoming involved in conflict.
3658	Springfield Star Blackmountain	Springfield Star Blackmountain Summer Street Soccer Programme	£4,935.00	£2,000.00	Summer street soccer is an intervention programme aimed at 10-15 yr olds to take place in the Springfield/Highfield areas of West Belfast over each Friday evening of July, with a culture evening and street party to take place on 11th July. The venue for the programme will be the new 3G mini soccer pitch in the Blackmountain Community. We plan to invite all local youths to take part in a soccer excellence programme which consists of 4 evenings of tournament style football games, with a trophy presentation and also refreshments, to be held in the local community centre. We plan to run this project between the hours of 7-10pm every Friday.
3693	St James' Forum	July/August Respite	£4,000.00	£3,000.00	To take 50 youth away from the area at times of heightened tensions. A residential from 10th-13th July, and camping trip 8th-10th Aug.

3961	St John Bosco	Summer boxing is an alternative to violence programme	£5,860.00	£1,400.00	A cross community programme designed to provide 16 underpriviliged local youths (aged 16-18) with regular training and development programme over the summer months. The programme will focus on instilling discipline, teamwork values and also establishing inter and cross community relations.
3852	St Matthew Sports and Social Club	CREATE	£4,935.00	£2,000.00	A personal development programme, incorporating a midnight soccer tournament and residential delivered throughout July and August.
3889	Star ABC	Summer Knockout	£1,081.00	£750.00	The project will provide taster training sessions and the opportunity to attend sporting events in sports that participants wouldn't normally associate with. The club will also open in August, a time when most youth/sport provision is normally closed.
3829	The HUBB Community Resource Centre	Summer Rap - Shore Road Kids	£3,187.00	£2,750.00	To deliver a set of activities for a group of 45 teenagers drawn from the lower North Belfast area thereby taking them away from interfaces and antisocial behaviour related to July and August
3941	Wheelworks	ArtCart Summer Intervention	£1,440.00	£1,000.00	60 young people aged 5-18 from 3 interface areas/areas at risk of potential disorder will take part in digital and arts workshops on that Artcart mobile arts vehicle (featuring darkroom, sound recording studio, digital music/photography workstations, all the latest software, and stage facilities) exploring cultural diversity themes.
3917	Youth Initiatives	Summer Life East	£5,150.00	£3,000.00	Summer Life East is a 2 month summer outreach project to divert, challenge and encourage at-risk young people (11-18) in key East Belfast Areas during July-August 2014. Young people will create their own local youth community assisted by Summer Life through street outreach, cultural identity workshops, volunteering and practical community service.
			£175,512.00	**£108,003.00**	

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Room G50
Stormont Castle
Belfast

23 October 2014

Dear Colette,

Together: Building a United Community

At its meeting of 22 October 2014, the Committee received a briefing from Departmental officials on the progress of Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

During the briefing officials agreed to provide further information on a range of issues as follows:

- The date that the briefing paper for the evidence session was forwarded to Ministers for approval:
- The specific budget for the 10 shared campuses project;
- Whether those projects not selected in the first tranche of shared campuses are provided with assistance to develop future proposals;
- Information on the progress of the first three shared campuses;
- Clarification on whether the Lower Newtownards Road urban village includes the Short Strand interface area;
- A list of the 11 shared neighbourhood sites that have been identified;
- A list of the 125 summer schools / camps, how much funding was allocated to the scheme and how many of the schemes would have happened anyway;
- If copies of the Delivery Plans for the 7 headline actions can be shared with the Committee; and

Northern Ireland Assembly

- A copy of the report on the review of the structure, delivery and impact of the existing funding delivery mechanisms.

The Committee is aware that the cross-cutting nature of these queries will require liaison with other Departments, which may require a longer timeframe than normal. A response would therefore be welcomed by 13 November. A partial response should be provided should a full response not be completed by that date.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

OFMDFM Invitation – Summer Camp Co-Design Workshop

Together: Building a United Community was launched on 23 May 2013 by First Minister and deputy First Minister, it is the Northern Ireland Executive's strategic framework for improving good relations. One of the four key priorities set out in the strategy is 'Our Children and Young People' with several headline actions one of which is; to develop a summer schools/camps pilot programme with a focus on sport and development activities initially consisting of 100 summer school/camp projects to be run throughout summer 2015.

We are hosting three co-design workshops to help inform the development and design of the programme of these 100 summer schools/camps for implementation in the summer of 2015 and we are inviting key stakeholders who will be able to input into this process. The design and development of the summer schools/camps will run in parallel to the development of a wider strategic interventions programme but will also be an integral part of that programme.

The workshops will be half day morning event (9.45am – 12.30pm) and will take place on:

- 1 December 2014 – Derry City Hotel
- 4 December 2014 – Belfast
- 10 December 2014 – Armagh City Hotel

As spaces are limited at the co-design workshops, I would be grateful if you could complete and return the attached registration form to policy.unitedcommunity@ofmdfmni.gov.uk. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

Please return completed registration forms to policy.unitedcommunity@ofmdfmni.gov.uk by 21 November 2014

Papers for the workshop will issue in advance to participants that have registered. If you are unable to attend the workshop but would be interested in submitting comments on the development and design of the workshop please let me know.

Please circulate this email to relevant groups that you may feel have an interest in the development and design of the Summer Schools/Camps Programme.

Regards

Maria

Maria Hannon
Good Relations - Funding and Delivery Branch

Good Relations and Financial Governance Division
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
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Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister
www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk

Co - Design Workshops – Summer Camps/Summer Scheme

Registration Form

Name:	
Organisation:	
Position in Organisation:	
Postal Address:	
Email Address:	
Telephone No:	
Workshop will finish with Lunch Please confirm if you will be staying for Lunch.	Yes ☐ No ☐
Please note any Dietary/special requirements:	

Which of the following upcoming dates do you wish to attend? Spaces are limited for each venue.

1 December 2014 at 9.45am – Derry/Londonderry ☐

4 December 2014 at 9.45am – Belfast ☐

10 December 2014 9.45 am– Armagh ☐

Please return completed registration forms to

policy.unitedcommunity@ofmdfmni.gov.uk by 21 November 2014.

OFMDFM Summer Camps update

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20 March 2015

UPDATE FOR STAKEHOLDERS WHO ATTENDED SUMMER CAMP CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Thank you for participating in one of the Summer Camp co-design workshops that we held in December 2014 and January 2015. We gathered a wealth of information and extremely useful views and ideas which have helped us to move forward with the design of the 2015 Summer Camps Pilot Programme. At the workshops we promised to write to you in early Spring with;

(i) a summary of the feedback gathered at the workshops and the youth engagement sessions we ran in parallel to the workshops
(ii) an update on the progress we have made.

Please see the attached document which is a summary of the feedback we received as a result of all the sessions.

In terms of the design of the 2015 Summer Camps Pilot Programme, I am pleased to advise that we have made significant progress. Following on from the workshops and youth engagement sessions we established a Co-Design Team which included a number of key stakeholders including representatives from local Councils, Education and Library Boards, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, Department of Culture Arts and Leisure, Department of Education, Community Relations Council, Youthnet and the Youth Council.

The team was tasked with drafting a design proposal for the Summer Camp Pilot Programme, recommending draft outcomes and considering options for how the programme could be delivered in 2015. Running in parallel to this we also had a Youth Co-Design Forum and their input fed directly into the deliberations of the Co-Design Team. The Co-Design Team has now made its recommendations in respect of the design, outcomes and delivery of the Programme and those recommendations are now with Ministers for their consideration.

Funding in the region of £1m has been secured to implement the Summer Camp Pilot Programme in 2015. When Ministers have approved the final Programme design, and all the necessary arrangements are in place, it will be opened for applications and we will advise you accordingly.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Bronze

May I take this opportunity to thank you again for your interest in the Summer Camps Programme and for all your input to date, which has been extremely valuable to the process.

If you have any further queries please send them to policy.unitedcommunity@ofmdfmni.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

LINSEY FARRELL
DIRECTOR OF GOOD RELATIONS AND FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE DIVISION

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Bronze

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

During December 2014 and January 2015 OFMDFM organised several Summer Camp co-design workshops and youth engagement sessions. Through discussion at the workshops and engagement sessions, around a number of key themes, we obtained input and views from stakeholders which has helped inform the development and design of the programme of 100 summer camps for implementation in the summer 2015. This document is a summary of the feedback received.

1. Youth Engagement – Feedback

Around 118 young people were involved in the youth engagement sessions.

1.1 Young People's Role in a United Community

Most young people stated that they ***felt distanced from their parents and other adults often "outdated" views regarding difference, mobility and personal safety***. Whilst sectarianism and racism continue to be societal issues, drugs and alcohol, unemployment and mental health issues are believed to be more relevant youth issues. They feel disengaged with divisive political squabbles as these issues appear irrelevant and trivial to them.

Those consulted reflected that in some areas, paramilitaries continue to influence young people's behaviour, especially during the summer months and therefore seasonal programmes need to target young people who may be vulnerable to making the wrong choices.

Those involved in structured youth work programmes felt that they brought both personal and community benefits. Some commented that ***young people can be stereotyped and left out of wider community decisions and actions***. Therefore there was a need to support young people to become involved in positive projects, given options that they can progress through and a platform to demonstrate their worth.

1.2 Summer Camp Design

There was strong support for the Summer Camps, particularly from young people who had experience of attending similar programmes. Those consulted welcomed the ***cross-community and inter-cultural approach***, although there was a slight reticence in one group with regards to including people with physical and learning disabilities. However it was agreed that there should not be separate Summer Camps for ***young people with disabilities***, rather they should be included in all the programmes. It was suggested that people who don't attend integrated schools, or live in areas where there are existing problems should be specifically targeted. It was recommended that camps should reflect a mix of cultural and religious backgrounds, as well as taking into account gender, sexual orientation, rurality and socio-economic classes.

Conversations indicated that potential attendees would ***need preparation*** to help them cope with different situations before attending and perhaps get a chance to meet other groups socially in advance. They also felt it was important participants should be aware of the importance of ***respecting and showing understanding*** towards others views, as only then would people feel comfortable to discuss and engage in good relations work on the camps. It was suggested that groups should prepare for the camps in advance by discussing the topics to be explored (e.g. sectarianism, culture, diversity, respect, rights vs responsibilities, 'post conflict' and peace process). The depth in which they were discussed should be age dependent.

They felt that if issues arose at camp they should be initially given the space to address issues themselves. Although youth workers and leaders would need to be

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

equipped to deal with problems if they were likely to escalate. They felt that those delivering the camps should reflect a range of voluntary, community and statutory organisations. However leaders should have experience and qualifications in youth work and should have had diversity training, or similar.

Although they were focused on ***meeting new people***, they felt that peer groups should be recruited as they wouldn't want to go alone. However, they stressed the need to ensure that people were assigned to mixed groups and that there should be efforts to spend free time together. It was clear that the camps needed to create "an experience" for people and all of those consulted felt that it should ideally be held on a **residential** basis.

Young people wanted an ***informal atmosphere at the camp***. They believed that parents should be informed of activities and attend showcases, but not the actual camps. There was also a reluctance to involve schools amongst some young people. Those consulted requested a high degree of interaction in terms of the activities which spanned drama, study visits, music, team sports to include paintballing/airsoft, water sports, working with animals, outdoor pursuits such as assault courses, orienteering, bouldering, hiking. However, they also recognised the need for a ***balanced programme*** which would benefit their knowledge and skills (e.g. motivational speakers, first aid, UCAS points, OCN). There was additionally a preference towards the ***use of young adults as staff and volunteers whom young people could relate to***. Some felt that participants could be given specific ***responsibilities that contribute to the group***. The aim would be to challenge, push boundaries and inspire young people to keep involved in personal development.

Older teens didn't want to attend camps with younger teens and suggested splitting the age groups into two or three year age bands. However, there was ***strong interest in older age groups being trained to deliver some of the activities*** to or mentor the younger participants. They felt that not only would this be beneficial for those who would be peer leaders, but it would also enhance the summer camp experience for participants.

Initially many young people felt that the camps should be free of charge to the end user. However, after explanation of the potential costs related to accommodation, catering, activities, they felt that voluntary contributions, a reduced percentage of the cost or a small charge of £5-£20 per person would be acceptable and affordable to most. Some felt that those attending should be ***involved in participatory budgeting***, in order that they understand the financial value of the experience.

The branding of the Summer Camps was deemed extremely important and if done properly, it would be the sort of activity that every young person from Northern Ireland would want to participate in. To these ends, young people felt that a ***cohesive branding*** across Northern Ireland was needed. It was recommended that promotion should be undertaken via established youth groups and Forums, radio, social media, posters and leaflets in schools and youth clubs. It was noted that young people usually only hear about what is going on within their local estate and that it would be better if they could choose from a wider list of options and feel confident that they would be welcomed in other areas. Those consulted also felt that there needed to be supports in place to ***enable relationships to continue post-camp***.

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

2. Co-Design Workshops – Stakeholder Feedback

Around 200 stakeholders were involved in the co-design workshops.

2.1 Embedding Good Relations

The use of Summer Camps as a vehicle to deliver good relations outcomes was supported by a range of stakeholders. However there was concern regarding the potential for tokenistic activities, the potential for funding motivated partnership development and contrived high level contact. It was suggested that the camps shouldn't be focused on the past, rather they should be aspirational and motivate young people to make a difference and to set and achieve goals. The consensus was that learning should be experiential rather than overly structured and co-design attendees highlighted that good relations can be a natural by-product of teambuilding, sports, volunteering and/or employability focused activities.

The type and depth of the issues addressed will depend on the particular groups' needs and age, but camps should ultimately focus on creating the right environment to enable trust, common interests and relationships to develop. It was recommended that existing good practice within the youth sector should be explored in order to inform the structure and ethos of the Summer Camp programme.

One attendee commented that there should be good relations training for all youth leaders in general, in order to encourage positive attitudes across the board. The groups and staff involved in Summer Camps should be signed up to good relations principles.

2.2 Camp Design

There was strong support for youth designed and led Summer Camps, ensuring that participants decide what issues the camp will explore and how it is delivered. In order to work strategically, it was recommended that ***existing peer leadership models are used to ensure skills development, empowerment, legacy and a clear progression route (with accreditation)***. It was suggested that youth volunteers could initially be sought from existing groups. However, subsequently those who had attended camps could be trained to be future mentors, volunteers and leaders. It was also suggested that links could be forged between the United Youth Programme and the Summer Camp programmes with young people who had completed the former, serving as volunteers on the camps. A number of those consulted recommended the need to identify relevant participant outcomes and to use those developed for the United Youth Programme as a reference.

It was suggested that the criteria should be flexible enough to allow providers to determine the most appropriate age splits with the 11-19 year old target group (e.g. 11-13, 14-16, 17-19 years) and the types of activities used to deliver the desired outcomes (e.g. digital technology, music, drama, crafts, sports, outdoor pursuits, dance). ***Some felt that day camps might be more appropriate for younger age groups and that a less-intense five day camp may be better for some groups than a packed three day format***. It was recommended that the Summer Camps should not be defined and limited by their geographical location. Rather, they should reflect specific specialities, with individuals and groups choice of camp reflecting their interests as opposed to its proximity.

Overall, ***residential activities were preferable*** – both for young people and service providers. These give people the opportunity to leave their usual environment and help facilitate the introduction of new experiences and the forming of a group

identity. However, as it may be difficult to hold the attention of older age groups over a prolonged period, there was a suggestion that two weekends might be better than consecutive days. Ultimately stakeholders agreed that the structure of the camps depended on the young people involved and it should be the responsibility of the groups to choose the most appropriate options. With younger age groups, there would likely need to be more emphasis on leisure activities, whereas older groups could be challenged on a deeper level.

However, innovation, creativity and fun were deemed essential partners to learning. The inclusion of free time to allow mixing during residentials was thought to be necessary to friendship development and to enable people to relax after a full-day of activities. Evenings should include smaller group debrief/reflection sessions as well as wider youth led entertainment.

It was highlighted that there is a degree of (controlled) risk involved in working with young people on good relations and that funders and partners should recognise this and step out of their comfort zone. A number of those consulted reported that they didn't put any restrictions on clothing such as football tops etc. as young people are accepted in the way they usually present themselves, with any issues dealt with as they arise. Summer Camps should offer an atmosphere and experience not otherwise available in order to make the greatest impact.

It was generally agreed that a charge should be placed on the camps. However, there should be flexibility to ensure that young people are not excluded as a result. Charges of between ten-forty pounds were recommended, with discounts for more than one child.

2.3 Pre - and Post - Camp Engagement

Issues relating to confidence, communication and social skills should be addressed prior to moving onto good relations issues and cross-community activities. ***It was agreed that Summer Camps cannot exist in isolation, rather they must link to a process of long-term engagement, ideally where young people have had a degree of contact prior to the camp.*** Those consulted reported an increasing number of groups already undertaking cross-community activities, with young people already at a stage whereby they can mix freely with people from different backgrounds. Individuals thought that some assessment of readiness was needed and this should be the responsibility of local providers who know the young person and the basic skills required for camp participation.

It was recommended that pre-camp preparation should link in with existing infrastructure and programmes. A range of ongoing work was cited, to include accredited and non-accredited programmes in good relations, peacebuilding, cultural diversity. However, the underlying objective was to increase knowledge, understanding and empathy of difference. ***It was suggested that schools could further reinforce themes through Live Life Work (LLW) and Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).*** Attendees suggested that the most powerful impact of the camp experience will likely occur from getting to know each other and testing out cultural stereotypes and myths in a safe and controlled environment. ***It was highlighted that localised summer schemes could act as a starting point for the Summer Camps.***

Some individuals suggested setting up a private Summer Camps Facebook Forum in order to showcase local partnerships and keep interest and contact maintained post-camp. However, there was consensus that although social media is a good way to keep relationships going, there is no substitute for regular face to face interaction. Localised long-term partnerships between schools, community and youth groups was believed to be most beneficial, as would be is easier for young people to stay in

contact. Opportunities to identify shared interests and signposting to local groups and activities should be promoted. ***The concept of an associated development fund to work on localised joint projects was also supported.*** It was also suggested that an annual Summer Camp conference could be held to showcase good practice and help plan for future activities and funding.

2.4 Parental Involvement

Most of those consulted stated that parental involvement can be difficult to achieve and isn't necessarily a prerequisite for success. It was pointed out that information sessions can provide parents with information about the camp aims and activities. Parents could also volunteer at the camps, however teenagers are unlikely to want this and the ***Summer Camps should be geared towards the young people***. It was deemed to be an opportunity for participants to transfer learning into the home environment and that parents could be invited to the last day of camp or a celebration event in order to understand achievements. The production of a DVD for each participant to take home and share was also recommended.

A few individuals suggested linking with community groups and family hubs which are delivering good relations programmes to parents and to work in tandem to identify young people who might benefit from attending a camp along the same themes. A minority also suggested that the use of older volunteers/mentors could bring an intergenerational element and mutual learning. However, the general consensus was that the Summer Camps should be focused on young people.

2.5 Targeting and Recruitment

Whilst those consulted recognised the need to target young people living in areas in which there is heightened tension, it was felt that the ***camps should recruit more widely.*** It was reported that young people living outside Belfast and in rural areas also have little social contact with people from different backgrounds and would benefit from Summer Camp participation. Some suggested that over-emphasis upon interface communities would serve only to stigmatise those living there. It was also highlighted that existing Summer Intervention funding criteria prioritises interfaces and hotspot areas. Therefore the Summer Camp programme must be careful that it does not duplicate resources.

A rural/urban and social class mix was welcomed, as was the integration of minority ethnic groups (to include Travellers) and people with disabilities. Other suggestions for inclusion were young people in care, those in alternative education, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT), or experiencing homelessness. On the other hand, individuals stressed that some degree of targeting is needed in order to avoid duplicating open access summer scheme provision.

It was also noted that young people can be reluctant to engage in youth interventions during the parading season and other community celebrations. Therefore it is important that providers have adequate lead in time to build strong relationships. A core pre-requisite should be successful completion of a relevant programme of work.

It was recommended that existing local expertise is used to identify and engage potential participants. Agencies such as Youth Justice Agency, PSNI, PCSPs, social services, voluntary and community organisations, schools, sports clubs, faith based and youth groups should work in partnership to identify participants. It was recommended that existing structures are used rather than establish new groups. Word of mouth and detached youth work were deemed to be powerful recruitment tools. The use of Summer Camp Advocates could also be explored with previous participants helping to prepare young people and promoting the experience.

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

2.6 Promotion

It was recommended that the Summer Camps should be promoted as a leadership programme linked to peacebuilding and good citizenship. However, the activities must provide a unique experience, skills development and progression. It was deemed necessary to explain the overarching purpose of the Summer Camps to ensure that young people are fully aware.

The Summer Camp "brand" needs to tap into youth culture. Information sessions and colourful advertising and merchandise (e.g. hoodies, t-shirts, water bottles) should be used and packaged attractively to ensure get young people's attention (not as "good relations"). There was a suggestion that the different camps or activity strands could have their own identity under the Summer Camp brand in order to make it more personable. Although some people didn't like the Summer Camps terminology, it was preferable over "Summer Schools".

It was additionally ***recommended that young people, leaders and volunteers could sign up to a set of universal Summer Camp values and behaviour*** in order to illustrate their commitment. OFMdFM was challenged to "think big" and show their commitment by investing long-term and creating and promoting Northern Ireland based Centres of Excellence in this area.

2.7 Required Experience and Skills

Stakeholders stated that those delivering the camps must have the appropriate governance structures, clearances, risk assessment and child protection policies and procedures in place. It was also stressed that they should have a strong track record of delivering similar youth interventions, community connections and partnership working.

Relevant qualifications and experience were thought to be very important to ensure that the camps deliver quality youth work outcomes. However, individuals did not want to exclude experienced arts, community and sports organisations from service delivery. It was also suggested that there should be options for NI wide, regional and local delivery. There were differences in opinion with regards to the suitability of faith-based organisations' to deliver Summer Camps. Overall, it was felt that focus should be good relations and not the promotion of religion. Ultimately, those consulted believed that providers need to be able to effectively deal with the complete range of issues that young people experience and will likely present at the camps.

It was recommended that consideration should be given to developing specific resources and training to support the Summer Camp Programme (for camp leaders and volunteers). There was concern that local groups would not be able to compete for funding against more heavily resourced regional organisations. Whilst some organisations did not want to use external facilitation, others recognised the need to fill specific skills gaps and suggested the development of a facilitator list to help low capacity organisations. It was also suggested that local politicians should be involved in some way in order to learn from the approach and show support.

The co-design session facilitated in partnership with RCN indicated that ***many youth workers in rural areas lack in confidence in good relations delivery and would often call in other organisations to deliver these elements***. Attendees highlighted the need to develop this skill in rural communities and particularly to support churches to become involved in delivery – perhaps collaborating to deliver a programme across their facilities.

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

2.8 Camp Location

There were contradictions in terms of the location of the camps. Many reported that local partnerships, skills, contacts, transport and facilities should be used for the camps – to include schools and leisure facilities. However, most of those consulted stressed the benefits of taking young people outside their usual environment into a residential setting as school premises may not be attractive to young people. Potential residential locations were identified to include ELB Activity Centres, Castlewellan Forest Park, Tollymore Forest Park, Corrymeela, Greenhill YMCA. A small minority believed that the camps shouldn't be restricted to Northern Ireland only.

2.9 Challenges

There was general ***confusion regarding where the Summer Camps will fit within the wider funding arena.*** Youth sector representatives reflected that the initiative had outcomes in common with both CRED and Summer Intervention funding. Indeed, some camp organisers stated that they would usually use a mix of these programmes to deliver their activities. All of those consulted were in favour of a simplified application process, rather than the need to service different funders with the same objectives and there was a consensus that awards for Summer Camps should be made in April in order to facilitate planning. Strategic level consultees were also frustrated by the disparity of central government funding streams and lack of regional coherence. The budgetary constraints were believed to provide the impetuous to ensure value for money, administrative streamlining and more collaborative working practices. ***The need for stringent eligibility criteria which emphasises cross-community partnership, commitment and progression was recommended. Long-term commitment to the Summer Camp Programme from OFMdFM (3-5 years) and adequate resource allocation was requested.***

Concern was raised regarding whether or not OFMdFM intends to replace existing Summer Intervention funding with the camps programme. Those involved in interface work felt that this would not be viable as a proportion of young people will need in-depth support and diversion during heightened community tensions. ***During the discussions a few individuals also made reference to a potential reduction in CRED funding which could be "plugged" by this model.*** Others felt that greater consideration needs to be given to issues of targeting within the criteria. Whilst many believed that attendees from varied backgrounds were desirable, youth work resources should be primarily targeted at those areas and people most in need. A number of additional challenges were also highlighted. These include:

- Low capacity of groups may mean buying in costly external expertise;
- Vulnerability of the community and voluntary sector in the current economic climate and loss of staff has left skills gaps and uncertainty;
- Adequate lead in time to enable groups to prepare (e.g. application deadlines, communication of award by April) – as applicants may not be able to name specific external contractors to be used, there may need to be a two stage process that could then be developed for operation in June post-consultation with young people;
- Potential to displace existing summer schemes/camps;
- Lack of availability of appropriate facilities;
- Potential high transport costs, particularly in rural areas;
- Suitability and breadth of activities offered;
- Difficulties in motivating young people to participate in organised activities;
- Necessary skills to know when a group is "ready" to participate;
- Agreeing a fair selection criteria and balancing the mix of participants to ensure success;
- Making sure good relations outcomes are achieved via the activities in a natural way;

OFMDFM Summer Camps Pilot Programme
Summary of Feedback

- Provision of a level playing field in terms of class and ability (a camp uniform such as a hoodie may overcome this);
- Appropriate and consistent branding and merchandise (and naming of the programme) to be designed by young people;
- Bedding down of new Council structures if they are to be administrators and/or delivery agents;
- Making sure that positive youth messages are disseminated;
- Equipping young people to make safe decisions regarding meeting-up post-camp and dealing with negative community attitudes;
- Combatting negative attitudes and gatekeepers within communities - a holistic approach with friendship groups and parents could help;
- Ensuring that contact and relationships are sustained post-camp; and
- Taking a realistic and long-term view with regards to evaluation.

2.10 Other Discussion

Those who had prior experience of camp delivery felt that the minimum target of 20 attendees was too low. The young people consulted also stated a preference for larger numbers as it would lead to a more unique experience. Many reported that they were already used to working in small groups on cross-community residentials, courses and projects and would like the camps to provide opportunities to meet people from different areas. The need for high adrenalin, innovative delivery models was identified along with related training programmes for volunteers and youth leaders/mentors. Although the issue caused debate, those with experience of camp delivery strongly recommended charging young people a set fee to attend, in order to promote buy-in and reduce drop-out rates.

Extract – OFMDFM response regarding PfG Briefing, 8 January 2015

Details of the membership of the Ministerial Panel for T:BUC

As a means of harnessing the collective commitment across Government, the Ministerial Panel comprises all Ministers from the Executive in addition to senior representatives from a range of statutory agencies and community partners.

Thematic subgroups will also be established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel to reflect the key priorities of this Strategy. The Chairs of these subgroups, once established, will also attend the Ministerial Panel meetings.

The current additional members to the Panel are:

- Mags Lightbody, Interim Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE);
- Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA); and
- Jacqui Dixon, Chief Executive, Antrim and Newtownabbey District Council, representing the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE)
- Jennifer Hawthorne, Chair of the Housing Thematic Subgroup
- Dr Neil Jarman, Chair of the Community Tensions Subgroup

Further information, including membership details, on the CRED Inter Board

This enquiry should be directed to Department of Education.

Communication with CRIS regarding the future rollout of the Buddy Scheme.

On 12 August OFMDFM officials facilitated a meeting between the Department of Education Early Years Team, who are leading on the rollout of the Buddy scheme, and representatives from Community Relations in Schools (CRIS).

On 31 October, following a request from CRIS, a further meeting was arranged by OFMDFM to allow the group to meet the new Director of Good Relations and Financial

Governance and provide details of the work they had delivered through the OFMDFM/Atlantic Philanthropies funded Contested Spaces Programme.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
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4 December 2014

Dear Colette,

Programme for Government

At its meeting of 3 December 2014, the Committee received a briefing from officials on the progress of a number of the Department's Programme for Government commitments.

During the briefing officials offered to provide further information on a number of issues including:

- Further information on the breakdown of Delivering Social Change funding;
- Details of the membership of the Ministerial Panel for T:BUC;
- Further information, including membership details, on the CRED Inter Board;
- Detail on what communication there has been with CRIS regarding the future rollout of the Buddy Scheme.

A response by 18 December 2014 would be appreciated. Should a response within this timeframe not be possible the Committee wishes to be advised of the reason why a longer period is required and the expected date of response.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

OFMDFM response regarding Street Games UK

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11 March 2015

Dear Kathy

TACKLING AWARENESS OF MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Thank you for your letter of 19th February, on behalf of the Committee, regarding correspondence from Mr Joe Donnelly, Manager of Tackling Awareness of Mental Health Issues (TAMHI) and his proposal that "Street Games UK" be considered as a model for the summer schools/camps programme.

Mr Donnelly had also written to Ministers and I enclose a copy of the response that was issued to him on 25 February 2015.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

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Our Ref: COR/754/14

Mr Joe Donnelly

25 February 2015

Dear Mr Donnelly

Thank you for your recent correspondence to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Summer Schools element of the Together: Building a United Community Strategy. We have been asked to reply on their behalf.

Ministers are pleased to hear about TAMHI's intention to run a street games project in the New Lodge and Tigers Bay areas. The cross community nature of your aims are very much in line with the objectives of the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

Ministers are also very grateful to you for your attendance and participation at the design process of the Summer Schools project. They are keen that all contributions are incorporated in this process, and would like to advise you that your suggestion in terms of the Street Games model will be included as part of this.

Given that your letter references the role that sport can have in building friendships and improving community relations, you may be interested in the proposed Play and Leisure Signature Programme. In October 2013, Junior Ministers announced a 7th Delivering Social Change (DSC) signature programme with the focus being promotion, play and leisure opportunities for children and young people.

Play is a powerful medium for teaching values to children and young people of all ages and has the potential to contribute to the realisation of a healthier, more creative, more tolerant and more cohesive society. It also has the power to improve community relations and allows children to express their identity and culture. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child explains that all children and young people have the right to play, however, there are many barriers that prevent them from enjoying this right.

The Play and Leisure Signature Programme is tasked with developing new sustainable opportunities for play, raising awareness of the benefits of play and ensuring that play is considered when policy is developed and new services are provided. Its aim is to support the realisation of every child playing more, every adult encouraging and valuing play more and every community supporting play more. The programme is currently in the development and design stage. If you would like further information on the Play and Leisure Signature Programme, please contact peter.hutchinson@ofmdfmni.gov.uk.

You may also be aware that the policy remit for sports on the whole resides with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. Ministers would advise you to make DCAL aware of your proposal, if you have not already done so. In addition, we will copy your correspondence to DCAL Minister, Carál Ní Chuilín for her information.

We trust you will find this response helpful and we wish you well with your efforts.

Yours sincerely

JUDITH WALLWIN
PS/First Minister

GAIL McKIBBIN
PS/deputy First Minister

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
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19 February 2015

Dear Colette,

Inquiry into Building a United Community

At its meeting of 18 February 2015, the Committee noted correspondence from Joe Donnelly, Manager of TAMHI (Tackling Awareness of Mental health Issues) who suggests the 'Street Games UK' concept as an appropriate model of engagement with regard to the proposed summers camps under the auspices of the Together: Building a United Community

The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department and ask that consideration is given to Street Games in the design of the summer camps for 2015.

A response by 5 March 2015 would be appreciated. Should a response within this timeframe not be possible the Committee wishes to be advised of the reason why a longer period is required and the expected date of response.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

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OFMDFM response regarding District Council Good Relations Programme

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19 March 2015

Dear Kathy

2012 NISRA Evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme

Thank you for the letter from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the recommendations of the NISRA evaluation into the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) that was undertaken in 2012.

The Department has accepted the recommendations of the NISRA evaluation and the majority of these have been implemented, primarily as the result of the DCGRP being fully aligned with the Together: Building a United Community strategy. Further work to implement an outcomes based approach to delivery is being implemented in 2015/16. Councils produce annual action plans for Departmental approval that set out a programme of work against each of the four key priorities of the Together: Building a United Community strategy underpinned by specific issues identified through local good relations audits. The Together: Building a United Community strategy has provided a strong overarching structure for the DCGRP which the Department regards as an important means of delivering the objectives of the strategy at a local level.

The Department recognises that more needs to be done to ensure letters of offer that issue to councils are not subject to undue delay. We will endeavour to ensure that letters of offer in 2015/16 are issued as quickly as possible.

We also recognise that more work is required to share best practice across the DCGRP. This was also recommended in the NISRA evaluation. With the implementation of the new 11 Council model in April, we will be exploring with councils the best way to take forward a

new shared learning initiative. This will enable councils and the Department to learn more of the many of the innovative and effective approaches to delivering good relations locally.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

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5 February 2015

Dear Colette,

Inquiry into Building a United Community

At its meeting of 4 February 2015, the Committee received a briefing from Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) representatives regarding its Inquiry into Building a United Community and the District Council Good Relations Programme.

Following the briefing Members agreed to write to OFMDFM to ask if the Department has accepted the recommendations contained within the NISRA evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme which was completed in 2012, and to ask when those recommendations will be implemented.

A response by 19 February 2015 would be appreciated. Should a response within this timeframe not be possible the Committee wishes to be advised of the reason why a longer period is required and the expected date of response.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

OFMDFM response regarding Urban Villages

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14 April 2015

Dear Kathy

URBAN VILLAGES

The Committee for OFMDFM had requested further information on the Urban Villages Programme following a briefing on Wednesday 18 March 2015 from the Landscape Institute and the Northern Ireland Environmental Link as part of its Inquiry into Building a United Community**.**

Urban Villages is an initiative, under the Together: Building a United Community (T:BUC) Strategy, to support good relations and a more united and shared community through neighbourhood based regeneration, sustainable social and economic change and better outcomes for people living in areas of deprivation. It includes a focus on maximising the potential of social assets within communities and aims to deliver an integrated and coordinated approach to good relations; community development; and physical regeneration.

Underpinning the approach is a commitment to 'co-design' with local residents to identify and agree local priorities and work together to shape ways to improve social cohesion and enhance the built and natural environment and quality of life for everyone in these areas - making Urban Villages better places in which to live, work, socialise, visit , invest and do business in.

Co-design stimulates community engagement and provides local residents with a meaningful and key role in how social, economic and environmental challenges are identified and tackled. The intention is to support development and delivery of innovative approaches to

these challenges, including the use of creative and cultural activities and reimagining the use of under-utilised public space in order to build momentum behind a more confident, connected and cohesive local community.

The Strategic Investment Board is supporting delivery and, in partnership with the Department for Social Development as lead co-ordinating department for Urban Villages, will develop strategic links and collaborative opportunities across departments, local government, statutory agencies, Arms-Length Bodies and with other stakeholders across education, business and the community and voluntary sectors. This can include professional organisations and representative bodies such as the Landscape Institute and the Northern Ireland Environmental Link.

The Colin and Lower Newtownards Road areas of Belfast were named as Urban Villages in March 2014. Three further Urban Villages were announced in early 2015: the Markets, Sandy Row and Donegall Pass areas (Belfast); Ardoyne and Ballysillan (Belfast); and the Bogside and Fountain areas (Derry~Londonderry).

Parallel work-streams are being progressed to build collaborative opportunities and networks across community and voluntary sector providers and support more joined-up approaches across government Departments.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

OFMDFM response regarding Budget Profile for T:BUC

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23 April 2015

Dear Kathy

LETTER FROM OFMDFM COMMITTEE – INQUIRY INTO BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY – BUDGET PROFILE

The Committee for OFMDFM has written to the Department seeking further information on the budget profiles for initiatives under Together: Building a United Community following consideration at its meeting on Wednesday 25 March 2015 of an update on the summer schools/camps co-design workshops held during December/January.

Budget profiles for progressing the headline actions for 2015/16 are laid out below. As the full costs of all actions are not yet known, we are not in a position to provide a full budget profile beyond 2015/16.

- United Youth Programme £3m
- 100 Summer Schools/Camps £1.2m
- 10 Shared Educational Campuses £0.2m
- 10 Shared Neighbourhoods £0.29m
- Cross Community Sporting Programme £0.545m
- Urban Villages Programme £2.46m
- Removal of Interface Barriers £0.77m

The above costs relate to revenue expenditure. Presently, there is no dedicated capital allocation to help deliver Together: Building a United Community. However capital costs across the headline actions are being assessed.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Room G50
Stormont Castle
Belfast

26 March 2015

Dear Colette,

Inquiry into Building a United Community – Budget Profile

At its meeting of 25 March 2015, the Committee noted an update on the summer camps co-design workshops which were held in December and January and that £1 million had been secured to implement the Summer camp Programme in 2015.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek a budget profile for all Together: Building United Community initiatives over the lifetime of the strategy.

A response by 13 April 2015 would be appreciated. Should a response within this timeframe not be possible the Committee wishes to be advised of the reason why a longer period is required and the expected date of response

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee

T:BUC OFMDFM briefing paper

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Deputy First Minister
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13 May 2015

Dear Kathy

Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community

Linsey Farrell, Director of Good Relations & Financial Governance Division will attend the Committee on Wednesday 13 May to provide a Departmental response to the Committee's Inquiry, Building a United Community. Linsey will be supported by Donna Blaney, Michael McGinley and Peter Robinson. Please see briefing paper below for the information of Members.

Yours sincerely

Colette Kerr

Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

Briefing Paper – OFMDFM Committee
Response to issues raised in the T:BUC Inquiry

Background

In Autumn 2014 the Committee for Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister opened a call for written evidence to the Committee in respect of an inquiry into Together: Building a United Community. A total of 70 written responses were received and a number of those who responded also gave oral evidence.

From an analysis of the responses received the following common themes have been identified and Departmental comment is provided accordingly:

Engagement/involvement with the sector (including co-design)

- In the development of Together: Building a United Community we have listened carefully to the wide range of detailed views provided, within the context of the consultation on the draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (CSI), in these responses on our approach to good relations and the cross-party working group on CSI used the consultation analysis as the basis for its considerations.
- The interest shown throughout the 2010 consultation process indicates the commitment of individuals and groups from across our society towards building a united community.
- Since we launched the Together: Building United Community Strategy, we have harnessed this commitment and continued to engage with a broad spectrum of stakeholders as part of the detailed design of the many actions being delivered.
- We greatly value the role played by the wide range of community groups, public authorities and interested individuals that willingly engage with us in the design of good relations work. There is a wealth of knowledge in this sector and we will continue to draw on this expertise in shaping and implementing our policies, actions and commitments.
- We have also had extensive engagement/involvement with the sector through a process of co-design. For example in respect of the United Youth programme there has been comprehensive and detailed engagement with youth related

organisations and young people themselves to ensure the programme has maximum buy-in and consensus.

- The co-design process begun, by OFMDFM, is being continued by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) and is being supported by a Design Team which includes representation from DEL, OFMDFM, the Department for Social Development, the Department of Education, Community Relations Council, Youthnet, Youth Council, International Fund for Ireland, Public Health Agency and Education and Library Boards.
- The establishment of the thematic subgroups, under the auspices of the Ministerial are key vehicles for engaging with stakeholders within the sector. It ensures that their input is obtained to help inform the way in which action and commitments are being delivered but also inform recommendations that are going to Ministers for approval
- Co-design has provided a massive opportunity to engage with the sector and the people directly impacted upon by the implementation of the headline actions. There has been extensive co design for headline actions such as the summer schools and camps and the United Youth programme. This engagement has been instrumental in shaping the way forward for both headline actions and has involved a wide range of stakeholders, in particular those young people directly impacted upon by both actions.

Cross Departmental Engagement

The Department is involved in a wide varied range of cross departmental engagement in respect of activities, actions and commitments related to T:BUC, these include:

- The Ministerial Panel, which is responsible for overseeing the delivery and implementation of the actions and commitments given within the T:BUC Strategy. The Panel reflects the collaborative leadership essential to achieving the vision of this Strategy. The Panel is chaired by Ministers from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and comprises all Ministers from the Executive in addition to senior representatives from a range of statutory agencies and community partners. The Panel facilitates discussion and sharing of views, experience and knowledge all of which helps to inform plans and the way forward in respect of T:BUC delivery;
- The Good Relations Programme Board, which meets bi-monthly, includes senior officials from all Departments covering a wide range issues aligned to T:BUC. The Board also holds meetings focusing on issues of special interest and recently these have included race hate and interfaces, both of which have involved wide ranging engagement between Departents, Statutory Agencies, Academia and the sector; and
- There are a range of other fora that OFMDFM is directly involved in. These allow the Department to highlight good practice and learning to Departments and the sector these include:
  - Interface Interagency Group;
  - Interface Community Partnership; and
  - Peacewalls Partnerships

Communications

- To enhance the current arrangements for engaging with stakeholders, in respect of T:BUC, the Department is putting in place a range of actions to enhance and build on its communication with stakeholders.
- A newsletter has been designed which will provide information to stakeholders, media and wider society on progress of different strands of the strategy as well

as using it to highlighting the positive differences the strategy is making. The newsletter will be produced periodically and will demonstrate the continuing progress that is being made.

- The Department also plans to make maximum use of the media opportunities that present themselves to highlight the positives and benefits with T:BUC and get the information into the public arena. Departments, with responsibility for headline actions, provide information on a bimonthly basis on events/launches in respect of TBUC commitments. This is in order to ensure all opportunities to update and inform our society of the progress being made in implementing T:BUC are availed of.
- In addition the Department will, in association with its partners such as the Community Relations Council, use existing fora as a means for engaging directly with Good Relations practitioners. This is key in order to address any disconnect that may exist with Good Relations activists/practitioners. It will also allow the positives of T:BUC to be re-enforced whilst highlighting the progress to date which in turn will help address negative perceptions that presently exist.
- A celebration event is planned for this year to recognize the successes under the T:BUC strategy and all of the work which has been taken forward in the area of Good Relations over the years.

Funding T:BUC

- The Stormont House agreement reaffirms the Executives commitment to full implementation of Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

  Commitment 72 *- The Northern Ireland Executive will ensure full implementation of the Together: Building a United Community strategy, and beyond that will commit to a continuing effort to eradicate sectarianism in all its forms.*
- Following on from this commitment and the subsequent agreement of the 2015/16 budget, resource funding totalling £13 million has been made available from the 2015/16 budget to progress Together: Building a United Community activities. The final budget settlement makes a £10 million allocation for T:BUC - to be held centrally by OFMDFM and allocated as part of the monitoring round process, once Department's requirements for 15/16 are known/become clear. In

addition to this DEL has received a £3m allocation for its United Youth Programme Pilot Phase in 2015-16 within the Change Fund.

- Almost £9m was distributed for good relations projects through OFMDFM in 2014/15. This is broken down as follows:
  - £1.7m through the Community Relations Council;
  - £3.27m through the District Councils Good Relations Programme;
  - £1.71m through the Central Good Relations Fund;
  - £750k through the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme;
  - £92K to North Belfast City Learning;
  - £700k through Summer Interventions; and
  - £747k through Contested Spaces.
- For 2015/16 steps have been taken to ensure that funding is released as early as possible in the financial year. This has been supported by the Executive's commitment in the Stormont House Agreement to ensure full implementation of the Together: Building a United Community Strategy and the subsequent agreement to allocate £10 million funding towards the delivery of Together: Building a United Community in 2015/16.

Plans

- OFMDFM has been working with the other departments responsible for the delivery of the headline actions to finalise information and implementation plans.

Sharing of best practice

- The Department is fully aware of the importance of sharing best practice and this is something that it does on a continual basis with Departments, Statutory Agencies and Good Relations sector. That said it is something that we are always striving to improve upon. For example the annual Good Relations Officer conference is a key means by which the Department conveys its priorities for the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP).
- The conference provides a forum for setting the strategic direction of the programme. For instance in 2013 the focus was on aligning the programme with the four key priorities of the Together: Building a United Community strategy,

while last year's conference focused on the importance of taking an outcomes based accountability approach.

- It is accepted that more needs to be done to facilitate sharing the good work being taken forward by our councils. The Department has engaged a Development officer for the DCGRP with a remit to identify and share best practice across the District Councils. Since September 2014, the Development officer has been based at the Community Relations Council and is now fully focused on programme development and ensures that the learning/best practice is integrated into programme development rather than the administration of the DCGRP.
- Following the implementation of the 11 Council model in April 2015 it our intention to launch a new shared learning initiative, to replace the existing regional clusters, and we will be speaking with GROs to examine the best ways of taking this forward.
- Through fora led by the Department such as the Good Relations Programme Board, learning and best practice is shared across all Departments. At these meetings presentations are given by groups, academics and others on a range of issues all of which are aimed at enhancing knowledge and understanding of the successes achieved, the challenges and difficulties faced and how these have been overcome. The aim being to learn and gain knowledge for inclusion in plans, projects and programmes within other Departments
- The Department is engaged with a wide range of other fora organised by the Community Relations Council and others.

Community planning

- As part of the local government reform, a significant number of functions will devolve to local government including planning and community planning functions. The changes are likely to have significant implications for the DCGRP from April 2015. Officials will engage further with Councils at Chief Executive and Director level and are particularly keen to ensure that Good Relations forms a key element of Councils' Community Planning obligations.

- Discussions have also taken place with colleagues in the Department of the Environment (DOE) on how best to take this forward. DOE held four public consultation events on the draft Statutory guidance for the operation of Community Planning.
- An OFMDFM official has been involved at each of these events to deliver a short presentation on the need to embed good relations in the Community Planning process. DOE's consultation period concluded on 9 March 2015.
- Training will be provided by CRC/ECNI for staff and elected members within the new councils to outline their responsibilities in relation to all aspects of good relations including race hate, in their role in implementing T:BUC.

Outcomes

- It is proposed that the performance monitoring framework for all programmes and projects related to T:BUC, including the Headline Actions will utilise an Outcomes Based approach.
- An Outcomes Based Approach is a disciplined way of embedding outcome-based decision making into planning, delivery and reporting for projects, partnerships and communities. It provides a focus on impact and not quantity, and to having fewer, but better performance measures.
- This approach will include the production of departmental guidance based on Outcomes Based methodology to monitor and evaluate actions/activities arising from Together: Building a United Community . This guidance is currently being drafted.
- The Department has already commenced work with other departments responsible for Headline Actions within the Strategy as well as District Councils and the Community Relations Council to take forward this approach, and training has been provided to all of these organizations.

Equality Impact Assessments

- Building a united, shared and reconciled community is the core aim of Together: Building a United Community – the Executive's Strategic framework for building good relations. The strategy outlines 7 headline actions essential to make this happen.

- Responsibility for each of the 7 headline actions rests with individual Departments. This responsibility extends to ensuring that all of the necessary equality proofing and screening work, and any subsequent equality impact assessment, in relation to the implementation and delivery of each of the headline actions, is undertaken in line with Section 75 legislative requirements.
- As OFMDFM has overarching responsibility for TBUC and has an interest, therefore, in ensuring that all work relating to TBUC complies fully with Section 75 all Departments have given an assurance that they are fulfilling their statutory obligation in the implementation and delivery of their headline actions. This forms part of departments' reporting to the Good Relations Programme Board on a bi-monthly basis.

Progress to date on headline actions

United Youth Programme

- One of the seven core headline actions committed to within Together: Building a United Community is the development of the United Youth Programme. This Programme is designed to offer structured employment, work experience, volunteer and leisure opportunities and is open to young people from both rural and urban areas who are not in education, employment or training.
- To date there has been comprehensive and detailed engagement with youth related organisations and young people themselves to ensure the programme has maximum buy-in and consensus.
- The co-design process, begun by OFMDFM, is being continued by the Department for Employment and Learning and is being supported by a Design Team.
- A call for concept proposals, to deliver pilot projects, was issued in early September. Following a development phase in the Autumn, over 150 pilot applications from a wide range of sectors were submitted in December. An assessment of these proposals was completed with assistance from the programme's Design Team.
- As a result, 50 successful organisations (57 proposals) have been selected to proceed to a further development stage, following which around 10 pilot schemes will be taken forward to move into delivery mode later in 2015, prior to the anticipated full roll-out of the programme in 2016.

100 Summer Schools/Camps

- A call for applications for Summer Schools and Camps was launched on 15th April 2015. The closing date for applications to be submitted to the Education Authority is 8 May 2015.
- The programme will build on the many existing examples of good practice that are currently operating in the community across our society.
- We held four summer school/camp co-design workshops and 5 youth engagement sessions during December 2014 and January 2015, to inform the design/criteria, outcomes and delivery model for the summer schools/camps

programme for implementation in the summer of 2015. These events were attended by over 200 stakeholders.

- The summer schools/camps programme will involve children and young people aged 11-19 taking part in 100 schools/camps. The schools/camps will have cross community participation, offer a range of activities (for example, art, sport, adventure, drama, education and music) and will have a significant good relations element.
- The programme aims to build positive relationships across a divided community. The summer schools and camps will be about challenging historic positions, encouraging debate and discussion and providing a mechanism where people can re-engage with one another, leading to sustained contact and friendship.
- £1.2 million funding has been allocated to summer schools/camps from the 2015/2016 budget.

10 Shared Education Campuses

- The Department of Education received 16 expressions of interest under the Shared Education Campuses Programme. The Minister of Education announced the first three successful projects on 2 July 2014, a shared STEM and sixth form facilities in Limavady and two shared education campuses, one in Moy and one in Ballycastle.
- A second call for applications opened on 1st October 2014 with the deadline for submissions of proposals by 30 January 2015. Six proposals were submitted under the second call, covering over 20 schools. It is hoped to announce the successful projects under this second tranche in June 2015.
- £0.2 million funding has been allocated to the establishment of ten new shared education campuses from the 2015/2016 budget.

Cross-Community Sports Programme

- The purpose of the programme is to use sport in a central role to break down divisions in society and will deliver a detailed good relations programme through the medium of sport with the emphasis on tackling sectarianism, racism and improving good relations.

- The Department of Culture and Leisure launched a pilot project on 5 January 2015 which ended on 31 March 2015. This pilot involved young people engaging in a range of sporting and creative activity with a strong good relations focus. The areas of Lower Falls and the Greater Village have been identified as the two Action Zones for the pilot project.

Urban Villages

- The Department for Social Development is responsible for this headline action. The first two locations were announced in March 2014 as Colin and Lower Newtownards Road. A further three locations have recently been announced - Markets/Donegall Pass/Sandy Row and Bogside/Fountain on 21 January; Ardoyne/Ballysillan on 16 February.
- A subgroup to the Urban Villages Programme Board has been established to develop a Good Relations Benefit Plan for each Urban Village.
- Stakeholder engagement is progressing regarding development of the first two locations. Plans are progressing to develop a coherent town centre for the Colin area of west Belfast which includes inputs from a range of departments including DRD, DE, DOE, DHSSPS and DCAL. Community engagement commenced in the Lower Newtownards Road Urban Village in October 2014 and is ongoing. Options are being considered in conjunction with stakeholders on developing concepts to deliver a sustainable Urban Village.
- The next step in the process will be to establish a project team for each of the new Urban Village areas to engage and work with the community in these areas to determine the boundaries of the urban villages, assess what is needed and develop priorities for each of the areas.
- The Urban Villages Strategy Board has been set up to meet on a monthly basis. It is chaired by OFMDFM Junior Ministers, and its membership includes representatives from DSD, OFMDFM, SIB and Belfast City Council.
- The Urban Villages Programme Board, chaired by DSD, has met on a number of occasions.

10 Shared Neighbourhoods

- The Department for Social Development is leading on this work.

- Presently 11 potential sites have been identified which could deliver over 600 social homes.
- The new homes at the first social housing development at Ravenhill Road have been allocated and a community cohesion plan is presently being developed. Construction works have commenced on the second Ravenhill site (Ravenhill Avenue), Felden, Netownabbey and the former PSNI Station at Crossgar Road, Saintfield. It is planned that the following sites will go on-site in the 2015-16 financial year – Killard in Newtownards, the Former Dunmurry High School, Burn Road in Cookstown, Ashgrove Avenue in Newry and Sunnyside Street in Belfast.

Interface Barrier Removal

- The Department of Justice is responsible for this headline action.
- At the outset there were a total of 59 interface barriers, 22 of which were owned by the Housing Executive. Work to date has reduced this number to 52 and engagement is currently ongoing in around 40 of the 52 remaining areas.

Ministerial Panel

- The establishment of a Ministerial Panel is a central commitment given within the Together: Building a United Community Strategy.
- The Ministerial Panel has met twice to date, with work underway to arrange a third in the near future.
- The formation of the Panel is critical to providing political leadership and collaborative approaches on the range of actions and commitments needed to effect change across four key areas:
  - Our children and young people
  - Our shared community
  - Our safe community; and
  - Our cultural expression.
- Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Panel have been agreed and membership has been widened to include Local Government, the Voluntary and Community Sector and key statutory organisations.
- Compositely, these sectors represent important vehicles for delivery of the strategy's actions and commitments and it should be recognised the benefits of

bringing additional perspectives and experiences to considerations as the implementation phase develops.

- Representatives from NICVA, NIHE and SOLACE NI have nominated representation onto the Ministerial Panel.

Good Relations Programme Board

- A Good Relations Programme Board comprising senior officials from relevant Government Departments who act as senior responsible owners for the various aspects of the Strategy's delivery has been established. Programme Board meetings take place in advance of Ministerial Panel meetings and occur on a bi-monthly basis.
- The Board will also meet to discuss specific issues in more detail including Race Hate and Interfaces.
- The programme board has met on 9 occasions with the next meeting scheduled for 13 May 2015.

Funders' Advisory Group

- Together: Building a United Community commits to the establishment of a Funders' Advisory Group that will sit alongside the Ministerial Panel within the delivery and implementation architecture of the strategy. The purpose of the group will be to work with the Ministerial Panel to ensure the strategic allocation of good relations funding in line with strategic objectives; and contribute to discussions on good relations funding and any future funding delivery model.
- A similar group has been established in respect of Delivering Social Change and the Social Investment Fund.
- So as to avoid duplication and ensure more co-ordinated work across the department's responsibilities, we are actively considering the implications of a group that encompasses all three funding areas.

Other Subgroups

- As committed to within the Strategy, a range of thematic subgroups will be established under the auspices of the Ministerial Panel to reflect the strategic priorities arising from Together: Building a United Community.

- The key role of the Thematic Subgroups is to support the Ministerial Panel in the delivery and implementation of the Strategy's actions and commitments.
- The Housing Subgroup and Community Tensions Subgroups have been established and have already met; work is at an advanced stage to establish the Children and Young People Subgroup.
- The Department of Justice (DOJ) is leading on the interfaces subgroup as responsibility for the removal of interface barriers sits with DOJ.
- Additional subgroups may be required to those outlined in the strategy and these will be established by the Ministerial Panel if considered necessary in response to emerging need.
- The thematic subgroups will be vital in ensuring representation and participation from a wide range of sectors. The chairs of the subgroups will be represented on the Ministerial Panel and will have the opportunity to feed through views and ideas emanating from discussions at subgroup meetings.

Review of Community Relations Funding and Practice

- T:BUC gave a commitment to commission a comprehensive review of the structure, delivery and impact of existing funding delivery mechanisms.
- The T:BUC strategy acknowledges that adequately resourcing good relations activity is critical to the effective implementation of its objectives. It also recognises the need to ensure that funding is directed in a way that secures sustainability of the infrastructure that has been established at local level and that continues to develop capacity of individuals and organisations working to build good relations across our society.

Creation of Equality and Good Relations Commission

- Together: Building a United Community includes a commitment to establish an Equality and Good Relations Commission that will act as an independent, statutorily-based organisation to provide policy advice and a challenge to Government.
- The draft Bill is under active consideration within the department. Once the draft Bill is agreed, we intend to initiate a 12 week public consultation on the draft Bill and its associated documentation.

- In advance of the enactment of legislation, departmental officials are working with both the Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council to consider the extent to which the aims and objectives of the T:BUC strategy can be delivered by these respective organisations within their existing remits.

OFMDFM response following T:BUC briefing

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11 June 2015

Dear Kathy

TOGETHER: BUILDING A UNITED COMMUNITY

The Committee for OFMDFM has written to the Department seeking clarification on a range of issues following a briefing from OFMDFM officials on the progress of Together: Building a United Community at its meeting of 13 May 2015. The information requested is laid out below.

Funding for Good Relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15

The table shows figures regarding funding provided by OFMDFM for good relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15, including identification of additional spend allocated in year 2014/15 following successful bids for delivery of priorities of Together: Building a United Community.

Programme	2013/14 £	2014/15 Opening Position (£)	2014/15 Final Position (£)	Additional expenditure 2014/15 (£)
District Councils Good Relations Programme	3,400,000	2,590,000	3,268,975	678,975
North Belfast Strategic Good Relations	770,000	670,000	750,000	80,000
Contested Spaces Programme	1,505,207	535,000	747,899	212,899
Central and Other Good Relations	1,100,000	576,000	1,756,247	1,180,247
Summer Intervention Programme	500,000	400,000	500,000	100,000
Summer Camps/Schools	nil	nil	200,000	200,000
Urban Villages	nil	nil	350,000	350,000
North Belfast City Learning Centre	92,000	92,000	92,000	Nil
Total Direct Funding	**7,275,207**	**4,863,000**	**7,665,121**	**2,802,121**

Figures in the table do not include expenditure by Community Relations Council (£3.256M) or other Departments in respect of the T:BUC headline actions for which they have lead responsibility. Some Departments were successful in receiving in-year bids in 2014/15 to support delivery against Together: Building a United Community. It should also be noted that the Contested Spaces Programme, jointly funded with Atlantic Philanthropies, was a fixed budget programme of £4M which ended in 2014/15.

Good Relations Indicators

The Good Relations Outcome and Indicator Framework has now been finalised and approved by the First Minister and deputy First Minister, following consultation. Work is currently underway to develop the first report detailing the baseline and historic statistics for the indicators.

Buddy Scheme

The Department of Education (DE) has advised that it had initially engaged with the Education and Library Boards' CRED (Community Relations Equality and Diversity) Interboard Panel, which it had hoped would be in a position to deliver and monitor the proposed buddying scheme. DE officials have had several meetings with representatives of CRIS (Community Relations in Schools) to discuss CRIS's 'Buddy Up' programme. The most recent meeting with CRIS representatives was in February 2015 following a meeting between DE officials and Chris Lyttle MLA (held at the DE Minister's request) to discuss the buddying action. A draft business case and monitoring arrangements for a pilot buddy scheme have been progressed. In the current funding context, however, the scheme cannot be moved forward. However, OFMDFM, through the Community Relations Council is supporting CRIS by way of core funding for 2015/16.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

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11 June 2015

Dear Kathy

FINAL VERSION OF GOOD RELATIONS INDICATORS

At its meeting of 13 May 2015, the Committee received a briefing from Departmental officials on the progress of Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

During the briefing officials agreed to provide an update on the progress of finalising the Good Relations indicators.

An update has since been provided to the Committee. The indicators were finalised on 22nd April 2015 and a copy of the final set of indicators is attached at Annex A.

Yours sincerely

Signed Colette Kerr

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer

ANNEX A

REVISED GOOD RELATIONS INDICATORS

APRIL 2015

KEY PRIORITY 1: OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Shared Aim: to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations.

Outcome 1.1
Improving attitudes between young people from different backgrounds.

a. % of children (age 16) who think relations between Protestants and Catholics are better than they were five years ago.
   % of children (age 16) who think relations between Protestants and Catholics will be better in 5 years time.
   Source: Young Life and Times

b. % who are favourable towards people from the Catholic community.
   % who are favourable towards people from the Protestant community.
   % who are favourable towards people from the Minority Ethnic Community.
   Source: Young Life and Times

Outcome 1.2
Young people engaging in bringing the community together.

a. % of young people who regularly socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community.
   Source: Young Life and Times

b. % of young people who have: done projects with pupils from other schools; had classes with pupils from other schools; used or shared sports facilities or equipment, like computers.
   Of those who have done projects, shared classes, facilities, etc. % who think sharing is a good idea.
   Source: Young Life and Times

KEY PRIORITY 2: OUR SHARED COMMUNITY

Shared Aim: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone.

Outcome 2.1
Increased use of shared space and services (e.g. leisure centres, shopping centres, education, housing)

a. % who think that Protestants and Catholics tend to go to different local shops or use different GP surgeries and other services in their area.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

b. % who think that leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

c. % of those who have children at school who think that their child's school is a shared space.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

d. % whose school has been involved in shared education with another school in the last academic year, broken down by type of activity.
Source: School Omnibus Survey

e. % of people who see the area they live in as segregated.
Source: Northern Ireland House Condition Survey

Outcome 2.2
Shared Space is accessible to all.

a. % who would define the neighbourhood where they live as a shared space.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

b. % who would prefer to live in a neighbourhood with people of only their own religion, or in a mixed-religion neighbourhood.
% who would prefer a workplace with people of only their own religion, or a mixed religion workplace.
% who would prefer to send their children to a school with children of only their own religion, or a mixed-religion school.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

c. Number (and %) of first preference applications to post-primary integrated schools that do not result in admissions to integrated schools.
% of those pupils enrolled at grant–aided schools, the proportion enrolled in integration education.

KEY PRIORITY 3: OUR SAFE COMMUNITY

Shared Aim: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety.

Outcome 3.1
Reduce the prevalence of hate crime and intimidation.

a. Number of racial incidents and crimes recorded.
Number of homophobic incidents and crimes recorded.
Number of sectarian incidents and crimes recorded.
Number of religion incidents and crimes recorded.
Number of disability incidents and crimes recorded.
Source: PSNI Statistics

b. The number of people presenting as homeless as a result of intimidation.
Source: Northern Ireland Housing Executive homeless presentation figures.

c. % of people who felt annoyed/intimidated by republican/loyalist murals, kerb-paintings or flags in the last year.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times
(This may be amended to reflect the outcome of work being progressed, following the Stormont House Agreement, on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition).

Outcome 3.2
A community where places and spaces are safe for all.

a. % of people who see town centres as safe and welcoming places for people of all walks of life.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

b. % who would feel safe going to events held in, for example, an Orange hall, a GAA club, a protestant secondary school, a catholic secondary school.
Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

c. % who would like to see peace walls come down now or in the near future (residents and general).
Source: Attitudes to Peace Walls survey

KEY PRIORITY 4: OUR CULTURAL EXPRESSION

Shared Aim: to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.

Outcome 4.1
Increase sense of community belonging (widens contribution beyond community background)

a. **%** who feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.
   % who feel a sense of belonging to Northern Ireland as a whole.
   Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

b. **%** who feels they have an influence when it comes to any of the local decisions made in their neighbourhood.
   % who feel they have an influence when it comes to any of the local decisions made in Northern Ireland.
   Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

Outcome 4.2
Cultural diversity is celebrated

a. % who think that the culture and traditions of the Catholic community add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society.
   % who think that the culture and traditions of the Protestant community add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society.
   % who think that the culture and traditions of the Minority Ethnic community add to the richness and diversity of Northern Ireland society.
   Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times

b. % of Protestants who think that their cultural identity is respected by society.
   % of Catholics who think that their cultural identity is respected by society.
   Source: Northern Ireland Life and Times
   (This may be amended to reflect the outcome of work being progressed, following the Stormont House Agreement, on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition).

Northern Ireland Assembly

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Colette Kerr
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister
Room G50
Stormont Castle
Belfast

14 May 2015

Dear Colette,

Together: Building a United Community

At its meeting of 13 May 2015, the Committee received a briefing from Departmental officials on the progress of Together: Building a United Community Strategy.

During the briefing officials agreed to provide further information on a range of issues as follows:

- Comparative figures regarding funding for good relations activity in 2013/14 and 2014/15, including identification of additional spend due to Together: Building a Untied Community;
- An update on the progress of finalising the Good Relations indicators;
- An update on the Buddy Scheme, administered by the Department of Education.

A response by 29 May 2015 would be appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee



Appendix 5

Research Papers



Research and Information Service
Briefing Paper

Paper 000/00 4 April 2014 NIAR 264-14

Michael Potter

Peace Building Initiatives: Examples Outside Northern Ireland

1 Introduction

This paper has been written in relation to an inquiry by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) into the current strategy for good relations and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, Together: Building a United Community[1] (TBUC). The 'Shared Future' strategy was published in 2005, following an extensive consultation process, to set out a framework for good relations in Northern Ireland[2]. A successor strategy, 'Cohesion, Sharing and Integration', was launched for public consultation in July 2010[3]. The consultation closed in October 2010 and an OFMdFM response stated that a revised strategy would be published[4]. The TBUC strategy was published on 23 May 2013.

1 OFMdFM (2013), *Together: Building a United Community*, Belfast: OFMdFM: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/good-relations/together-building-a-united-community.htm.

2 Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (2005), *A Shared Future - Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland*, Belfast: OPFMdFM: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality/community-relations/a-shared-future-strategy.htm.

3 'Ministers launch consultation for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration', Northern Ireland Executive press release 27 July 2010: http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news/news-ofmdfm/news-ofmdfm-july-2010/news-ofmdfm-270710-ministers-launch-consultation.htm.

4 Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (2011), *Response to the consultation on the draft Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, Belfast: OFMdFM: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/ofmdfm_response_to_csi_consultation.

At the most recent Departmental briefing to the Committee for OFMdFM on 5 February 2014, the strategy was summarised as follows[5]:

> *[T]he strategy sets out a range of actions and commitments for Departments, communities and individuals, who will work together to build a united community and achieve change against four key strategic priorities: our children and young people, our shared community, our safe community and our cultural expression. The headline actions range across the fields of education, housing, regeneration, sports, community interaction and interfaces. However, the range of commitments and actions extends well beyond the seven headline actions.*

A range of models for peacebuilding projects have been developed in Northern Ireland. This paper looks at examples of good relations and reconciliation projects outside Northern Ireland.

2 Good Relations and Reconciliation in Europe

This section summarises some examples of projects in Europe which seek to bring together diverse communities, particularly in contexts of inter-communal conflict.

United Nations Development Programme

The United Nations has supported a range of projects aimed at promoting social cohesion. A recent report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) summarises some of these initiatives[6]. The following are examples of such projects in Europe[7].

5 Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister meeting 5 February 2014, *Together: Building a United Community Strategy: Update from OFMDFM Officials*: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/February-2014/Together-Bilding-a-United-COmmunity-Strategy-Update-from-OFMDFM-Officials/.

6 United Nations Development Programme (2009), *Community Security and Social Cohesion: Towards a UNDP Approach*, Geneva: UNDP: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/thailand/docs/CommSecandSocialCohesion.pdf.

7 Ibid., pp.26, 39.

Employment for Young Former Combatants

Providing rapid employment for young men in post-conflict Serbia

Following the conflict, UNDP established a programme in South Serbia designed to provide rapid employment to ex-combatants and youth. South Serbia is the poorest part of the country with the highest level of unemployment. Six thousand temporary jobs were created, many of them working to repair and improve public infrastructure in the community. This helped to prevent key risk groups from re-engaging in violence and demonstrated a peace dividend to them and to the wider community.

Shared Spaces for Young People

Developing public spaces in Croatia

One of the pilot communities in the Safer Communities Project in Croatia identified the lack of recreational facilities for youth as a factor contributing to insecurity. An old playground was refurbished as a meeting place for youth, including a skateboard park and activity ground. In a highly divided post-conflict community of Croatians and Serbs, this has become a meeting place for youth from both sides.

Monitoring Progress

Participatory monitoring and evaluation in Macedonia

The Safer Community Development Project in Macedonia has used assessments both to measure progress and to increase participation. An initial perception survey and focus group assessment was used to create community profiles and establish a baseline for the project. Follow-on assessments were then undertaken every six months to assess progress. Smaller assessments were also carried out at the end of each activity – both to measure if the desired output had been achieved and to see how the different stakeholders and community members perceived progress. The project developed an M&E booklet and a manual to facilitate this process. An end of term review was then undertaken by a consultant as the project was completed. According to Macedonian Government figures, armed violence dropped by 70 percent during the project period and a project survey found that 90 percent of community members were aware of the project. The heavy emphasis on assessment contributed to the project's success by ensuring regular engagement with stakeholders and communities.

Council of Europe

An influential document on intercultural dialogue was produced by the Council of Europe in 2008. This states that social cohesion[8]:

> *...denotes the capacity of a society to ensure the welfare of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding polarisation. A cohesive society is a mutually supportive community of free individuals pursuing these goals by democratic means.*

Building on this:

> *Integration is understood as a two-sided process and as the capacity of people to live together with full respect for the dignity of each individual, the common good, pluralism and diversity, non-violence and solidarity, as well as their ability to participate in social, cultural, economic and political life.*

8 Council of Europe (2008), *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living Together as Equals in Dignity*, Strasbourg: CoE, p.11: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/source/white%20paper_final_revised_en.pdf.

The Intercultural Cities project showcases a range of models aimed at building community cohesion[9]. The following are examples of good practice from the project[10].

Education

- Rainbow school, Tilburg, Netherlands[11]: This is an example of a school with a majority minority ethnic school which maintains a high standard of education through a high teacher-pupil ratio (sustained through a subsidy), but also strong leadership and staff commitment. Plans were developed to incorporate a Muslim school with shared curricular activity, but, this not being agreed, the intention is to have two schools side by side with shared facilities.
- Whole family approach, Geneva, Switzerland[12]: This places an emphasis on teachers building closer links with families in order to form a better understanding of influences on learning from the home environment. Swiss federal law requires schools to make their facilities available to the community, which provides opportunities for activities for minority ethnic cultural development.
- Breaking down sectarian divides, Subotica, Serbia[13]: Schools in Subotica are being encouraged to use a common history curriculum which brings together Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian perspectives, on which historians from all three communities have collaborated. Other initiatives include an inter-school quiz competition in which teams have to answer questions on cultures other than their own.

Public Space

- Meeting places, Tilburg, Netherlands: Addressing a lack of public spaces where people can meet, a variety of local initiatives have been developed to encourage cross-cultural engagement, for example:
  - House of the World, an experimental garden for multi-cultural meetings, education, exhibitions and creative activities[14]
  - Round Table House, which is an inter-religious centre for meetings of all faiths[15]
  - Social Sofas, to encourage residents to sit down and talk to each other, planned to number 1000 (around 200 in place in 2013[16])
- City centre redesign, Neukölln Berlin, Germany: This urban regeneration programme for the main street of Neukölln, Karx Marx Straße, is to be transformed in a way that acknowledges cultural diversity[17].

9 Council of Europe Intercultural Cities project: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/Default_en.asp.

10 Council of Europe (2011), *Guidance for city policy-makers with good practice examples*, Strasbourg: CoE: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance/General.pdf.

11 'Education - Rainbow school in Tilburg: "colorful and excellent"', Intercultural Cities project: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance/Education/tilburg_en.asp.

12 'Education - 'Whole family' approach', Intercultural Cities project: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance/Education/geneva_en.asp.

13 'Education - Breaking down the sectarian divides in society', Intercultural Cities project: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/culture/Cities/guidance/Education/subotica_en.asp.

14 Huis van de Wereld: http://www.huisvandewereld.nl/.

15 Ronde Tafelhuis: http://www.rondetafelhuistilburg.nl/.

16 'SocialSofa zoekt Social sofas' [SocialSofa seeks social sofas], Tilburg.com, 31 October 2013: http://tilburg.com/nieuws/socialsofa-zoekt-social-sofas/.

17 Aktion! Karl-Marx-Straße: http://www.aktion-kms.de/.

Projects in Areas of Conflict

Youth Initiative for Human Rights

Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) was formed in 2003 to bring together young people across the former Yugoslavia. The foundation of the Initiative is explained in the following terms[18]:

> *The Initiative was formed by young people from these countries in order to enhance youth participation in the democratization of the society and empowerment of the rule of law through the process of facing the past and establishing new, progressive connections in the post-conflict region of former Yugoslavia.*

The Initiative has facilitated a number of projects, including the 'Visiting Programme', which consisted of structured encounters between young people from Serbia and Kosovo to explore perceptions and experiences of young people of the recent conflict[19].

Žene Ženama

The empowerment of women is a key area of post-conflict peacebuilding. Žene Ženama (Women to Women) is a cross-community women's centre in Sarajevo, which has run a number of specific programmes for developing the capacity of women and women's groups in and beyond the city, including the following:

- Capacity building - Žene i ženske organizacije u BiH[20]: Funded through a Swedish NGO, this project has used seminars, workshops and roundtables to develop the capacity of women's organisations in the areas of:
  - Raising awareness in local communities about discrimination
  - Improving knowledge in local communities about women's organisations
  - Improving communication channels between women's organisations and political institutions
  - Developing knowledge and capacity within organisations
- Women and peacebuilding - Žene u Izgradnji Mira – Pomirenje u Lokalnoj Zajednici[21]: This project consists of a series of workshops through which women explore the development of myths and ideology associated with national identity and a building of civic awareness. Engagement and dialogue between women of different identities creates a context for mutual understanding of conflict forces which affect them collectively as women.
- Labour market participation - Percepcija rodne (ne)jednakosti na tržištu rada u Bosni i Hercegovini[22]: Recognising societal assumptions that women will revert to 'traditional' roles following conflict, this research study examines the situation of women in employment and how women have been integrated into new patterns of employment in the post-conflict context.

18 'About YIHR', Youth Initiative for Human Rights: http://www.yihr.org/en/webpage/1.

19 Orli Friedman (2013), 'Structured Encounters in Post-Conflict/ Post-Yugoslav Days: Visiting Belgrade and Prishtina' in Olivera Simi and Zala Voli (eds.) Transitional Justice and Civil Society in the Balkans, New York: Springer, 143-162.

20 'Žene i ženske organizacije u BiH' [Women and women's organisations in BiH]: http://www.zenezenama.org/zene/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54%3Aene-i-enske-organizacije-u-bih&catid=35%3Aosnazivanjezena&Itemid=100&lang=en.

21 'Žene u Izgradnji Mira – Pomirenje u Lokalnoj Zajednici' [Women in peacebuilding – reconciliation in the local community]: http://www.zenezenama.org/zene/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=55%3Aene-u-izgradnji-mira-pomirenje-u-lokalnoj-zajednici-&catid=35%3Aosnazivanjezena&Itemid=100&lang=en.

22 'Percepcija rodne (ne)jednakosti na tržištu rada u Bosni i Hercegovini' [Perceptions of labour (in)equality in the labour market in BiH]: http://www.zenezenama.org/zene/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=56%3Apercepcija-rodne-nejednakosti-na-tritu-rada-u-bosni-i-hercegovini&catid=35%3Aosnazivanjezena&Itemid=100&lang=en.

- Dealing with the past - Ženski sud Balkana[23]: This project creates a network across the Balkans as a space for women to discuss the violent past, exploring aspects such as justice, truth, the rule of law, guilt and humiliation.

3 Community Cohesion

Much of the momentum for action and theorising around community cohesion in the UK has been driven by the legacy of racial tensions in northern England[24]:

> *The community cohesion agenda that emerged in the immediate aftermath of the street disturbances in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in 2001 represents the most unequivocal application of the new policy agenda that seeks to address social problems through the idea of community.*

While interest in cohesion has been a constant in mixed societies, this policy direction has given added impetus to defining social and community cohesion and identifying measures to encourage it.

Social cohesion is a psychological state of a sense of belonging. According to Wilkinson, social cohesion is[25]:

- A sense of community – people feel connected
- Neighbouring – people help each other and have relationships
- Attraction – people feel a preference for a place

Looking deeper, the picture of social cohesion is complex and fluctuates, but has been said to have the following features, or 'domains'[26]:

- Common values and a civic culture
- Social order and social control
- Social solidarity and a reduction in wealth disparities
- Social networks and social capital
- Place attachment and identity

This view does not consider ethnicity in isolation as a cause of a breakdown in community cohesion, but looks in the abstract at what underpins community, of which identity may be only one facet.

Ted Cantle also pursues this point in his independent review of the 2001 disturbances in Britain, that integration and segregation are often posed as alternatives, which hinders the debate that should be identifying the many different layers of community cohesion that need to be separated and considered. Differences are more apparent when they are multi-faceted, which "appears to allow ignorance about each community to develop into fear"[27].

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23 Ženski sud Balkana [women's court of the Balkans]: http://www.zenezenama.org/zene/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83%3Aenski-sud-balkana&catid=35%3Aosnazivanjezena&Itemid=100&lang=en.

24 John Flint and David Robinson (2008), *Community Cohesion in Crisis? New Dimensions of Diversity and Difference*, Bristol: Policy Press, p.2.

25 Derek Wilkinson (2007), 'The Multidimensional Nature of Social Cohesion: Psychological Sense of Community, Attraction and Neighbouring' in *American Journal of Community Psychology* 40, 214-229.

26 Ray Forrest and Ade Kearns (2001), 'Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood' in *Urban Studies* 38(12), p.2129.

27 Ted Cantle (2001), *Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team*, London: Home Office, p.28: http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/Default.aspx?recordId=96.

Projects have been developed throughout the UK in response to these concerns around integration and community cohesion, leading to a variety of models that may have some applicability to other contexts. For example, the Pathfinder Programme was established in 2002 to fund fourteen partnerships to develop community cohesion initiatives in their local areas. Examples of projects supported under this programme are as follows[28]:

- Reaching out to groups that are not engaged or represented in mainstream structures (Charnwood Borough Council)[29]
- Development of a charter for all local agencies to sign up to community cohesion principles (Stoke on Trent City Council)
- Commission of research to discover what works at community level (West London Alliance)[30]
- Healing History project to explore the local area's lost culture (in this case, mining), intergenerational conflict and the effect of a predominantly white, male culture on race relations (Mansfield District Council)
- Development of mechanism to involve young people in policy and practice (Southwark Borough Council)[31]

Community cohesion projects have been developed at the local level at a range of locations in the UK, each developing models of practice that suit their own localities. Indeed, at the time of writing, for example, the Centre for Social Relations at Coventry University has a database of 311 case studies of good practice for community cohesion projects[32].

4 Summary of Approaches

This brief and very general overview illustrates a variety of approaches to working with diversity and conflict across Europe. It is acknowledged that conflating peacebuilding and community cohesion brings together two areas of social and political development, but, without prejudice to the significant differences, certain common attributes can be of use in both areas.

In broad terms, good practice in peacebuilding has been the subject of guidance at the United Nations and the Council of Europe, and also there are Europe-based peace organisations[33] and networks of organisations[34] that have developed expertise in the area.

Some themes have that can be discerned from this brief survey of projects that may be of relevance to the Together: Building a United Community are as follows:

- Scoping of existing expertise:
    - Research to determine what is already taking place in the community (W London, GB)

28 Projects taken from Vantage Point (2003), *Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme: The First Six Months*, London: Home Office: http://resources.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Publications/Documents/Document/Default.aspx?recordId=92.

29 The report from the Pathfinder project informed current community cohesion policy in Charnwood: http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/communitycohesion.

30 The West London Alliance is a partnership of six West London councils: http://www.westlondonalliance.org/WLA/wla.nsf/Pages/WLA-2.

31 Southwark has a Youth Council and there are also local community youth councils: http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200167/southwark_youth_council/821/southwark_youth_council_structure/1.

32 'Good Practice Resource', Centre for Social Relations (formerly the Institute for Community Cohesion), University of Coventry (accessed 10 March 2014): http://www.cohesioninstitute.org.uk/Resources/GoodPractice.

33 For example, the Burghof Foundation in Berlin and Tübingen: http://www.berghof-foundation.org/en/.

34 For example, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office in Brussels: http://www.eplo.org/.

- Ensuring everyone is involved:
  - Mapping 'under the radar' groups (Charnwood, GB)
- Establishing common principles:
  - Community charter (Stoke on Trent, GB)
- Working with children:
  - Shared schools (Netherlands)
  - Shared curriculum (Serbia)
  - Community engagement in schools (Switzerland)
- Working with young people:
  - Recreational spaces for young people (Croatia)
  - Cross-community engagement for young people (Kosovo-Serbia)
  - Employment programmes for young people involved in conflict (Serbia)
  - Young people's involvement in decision-making (Southwark, GB)
- Community involvement:
  - Exploring local histories (Mansfield, GB)
  - Shared public spaces (Netherlands; Germany)
- Gender dimensions:
  - Women and peacebuilding projects (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Measuring success:
  - Monitoring and evaluation models (Macedonia)

5 Case Studies: Serbia and Croatia

Rather than looking at general models, this section looks specifically at two locations: Vukovar in Croatia and Subotica in Serbia. Vukovar was extensively destroyed during the war of 1991 primarily between Serbs and Croats after the disintegration of Yugoslavia, has a Serb minority in a Croat majority town and deals with extensive legacies of the conflict. Subotica in Serbia was largely unaffected by the war, but has been working to accommodate significant minorities, primarily Hungarians and Croats.

Participants on the Leadership and Learning Programme, funded through the CAN Peace Partnership[35], visited Vukovar and Subotica in March 2013, where they noted the contrasts in approaches to reconciliation and community cohesion in both locations[36]. An example from Subotica, referred to in Section 2 above, is cited as a model of good practice by the Council Europe. This section draws briefly on some of the reconciliation and community cohesion processes in both Vukovar and Subotica.

35 The CAN Partnership was supported in the Carrickfergus, Antrim and Newtownabbey borough areas through the Peace III Programme: http://www.canpeace3.org/.

36 Reflections of a participant in the study visit are available on the CAN Partnership website – 'Leadership & Learning Participants Visit Serbia and Croatia', News 16 April 2013: http://www.canpeace3.org/about/news/2013/04/Leadership-and-Learning-Participants-Visit-Sebia-and-Croatia.php. See also 'COUNCIL OFFICERS UNDERTAKE FACT FINDING MISSION TO SERBIA & CROATIA', Antrim Borough Council press release 5 March 2013: http://www.antrim.gov.uk/Utility/News/2013/COUNCIL-OFFICERS-UNDERTAKE-FACT-FINDING-MISSION-TO?feed=news.

Vukovar

Vukovar is a town and municipality in Croatia[37], separated from adjacent Serbia by the Danube. The declaration of independence by Croatia in July 1991 led to Yugoslav Army and Serb paramilitary intervention in Eastern Slavonia, including Vukovar, where there was a significant Serb population. The town was devastated during a three month siege, but following the capture of the town, some 300 individuals sheltering in a hospital were removed to nearby Ovčara farm and most of them executed[38]. Sentences of five to twenty years were handed down in 2009 to individuals accused of killing 200 Croats in the incident[39], although further cases continue to emerge[40].

A memorial centre to the Ovčara massacre was opened in 2006[41]. Vukovar was used by the Croatian government as a symbol of suffering during the war, as a 'victim-hero' image, due to its resistance before the town was captured and the atrocities carried out there after its fall[42]. Since the war, studies have indicated that the town still struggles to overcome multiple dimensions of trauma[43] and recovery is seriously hampered by demographic loss[44].

A number of NGOs have been operating in Vukovar to foster reconciliation and promote recovery. For example, the Centre for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance with aims to[45]:

1. development of human freedoms,
2. protection and development of human rights,
3. building a culture of peace and nonviolence as a life's quality,
4. development of interethnic, inter-religious and inter-cultural tolerance and cooperation,
5. development of feeling of safety and feeling of membership, self-esteem and respect of others

The Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace (CWWPP), with its headquarters in Vukovar, works for *'the empowerment of people during or after armed conflict or with the potential for such conflict to take control of their own lives, particularly at grassroots level'*.[46] However, an assessment of learning from the organisation's work found that provision for the extent of trauma in the region has been under-resourced[47].

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37 Vukovar municipal website: http://www.vukovar.hr/.

38 'Vukovar massacre: What happened', *BBC News* 13 June 2014: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2988304.stm.

39 '20 years prison for Ovčara first-accused', *B92* 12 March 2009: http://www.b92.net/eng/news/crimes.php?yyyy=2009&mm=03&dd=12&nav_id=57776.

40 For example, 'Not Guilty Plea For Ovcara Massacre', *Balkan Insight* 15 November 2012: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/not-guilty-plea-for-ovcara-massacre.

41 Spomen Dom Ovčara: http://www.hdlskl.hr/spomendom/.

42 Tamara Benjaglav (2012), 'Conflicting Memories, Competing Narratives and Contested Histories in Croatia's Post-war Commemorative Practices' in *Politička Misao*, 49(5), p.13.

43 Dinka Çorcalo-Biruški and Dean Ajduković (2009), 'Od dekonstrukcije do rekonstrukcije traumatizirane zajednice: primjer Vukovara' in *Revija za Socijalnu Politiku*, 16(1), 1-24.

44 Dražen živić (2012), 'Izazovi i mogućnosti poslijeratne revitalizacije Grada Vukovara' in *Croatian Geographical Bulletin* 74(1), 75-90.

45 'About us', Centre for Peace, Legal Advice and Psychosocial Assistance website, accessed 31 March 2014: http://www.center4peace.org/index.php/en/about-us.

46 Coalition for Work With Psychotrauma and Peace website, accessed 31 March 2014: https://sites.google.com/site/cfwwpap/.

47 Stichting Coalition for Work with Psychotrauma and Peace (2010), *The CWWPP/GRP Social Reconstruction and Health Toward the Future Lessons Learned from Eastern Croatia 1995-2010*, Vukovar: CWWPP: http://www.cwwpp.org/Documents/2010/Lessons%20Learned%20Very%20Very%20Definitive%20Version%202010%2011%2005.pdf.

While certain progress – not without its challenges – has taken place in the reintegration of essential services, such as Vukovar General Hospital[48], there are still significant areas where division is still pronounced. Serb and Croat pupils attend different classes at school[49], ex-combatants have not entered into any process of reconciliation[50] and the re-introduction of Cyrillic on public buildings alongside the Latin script, in accordance with Croatian equality laws, was met with violent resistance from Croats in the town[51]. Consequently, Vukovar has been described by observers as remaining very divided[52].

Subotica

Subotica is a city in Serbia on the border with Hungary and has a mixed ethnic population, with Hungarians, Serbs, Croats and the largest concentration of the minority Bunjevci[53]. In addition, there are significant numbers of other minorities, such as Roma, many of whom have gravitated to Subotica from other parts of Serbia, but also there are significant numbers displaced by the war in Kosovo[54].

In contrast to Vukovar, Subotica did not suffer wholesale destruction during the conflict or bear witness to any notorious atrocities. The key focus has been the accommodation of a diverse population, rather than a traumatised one divided by conflict.

Examples of initiatives in Subotica to manage community diversity are as follows:

- The city has developed the capacity for the development of all three official languages - Serbian, Hungarian and Croatian - which are used on official documents and regulations, Serbian and Hungarian are spoken in the courts and municipal translators are employed[55]. Bunjevac is not an official language, but there are radio and television programmes and newspapers in the language[56].
- The National Theatre was constructed in 2007-11 as a shared intercultural space in the city. The Theatre is home to two ensembles, one Serbian and one Hungarian[57].
- Moonlight Clubs were established to provide alternatives for young people (aged 14-18) gathering on the streets at night and operate from 8pm to midnight, with structured activities and supportive supervision. There are currently eight operating in the city[58].
- The Interetno Festival hosts folk dance performances from the three main communities in Subotica – Serbian, Hungarian and Croatian – as well as from elsewhere in Vojvodina and from Hungary[59]. Similarly, Etnofest draws artistes from all over the world in a world culture

48 Joshua Bloom and Egbert Sondorp (2006), 'Relations Between Ethnic Croats and Ethnic Serbs at Vukovar General Hospital in Wartime and Peacetime' in *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 22(2), 110-131.

49 'Children 'Less Tolerant Than Adults' in Croatia's Vukovar' in *Balkan Insight* 25 February 2013: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/vukovar-adults-more-tolerant-than-youngsters.

50 Janine Clark (2013), 'Giving Peace a Chance: Croatia's Branitelji and the Imperative of Reintegration' in *Europe-Asia Studies* 65(10), 1931-1953.

51 'Vukovar: divided by an alphabet', *Euronews* 8 November 2013: http://www.euronews.com/2013/11/08/vukovar-divided-by-an-alphabet/.

52 'Vukovar Still Imprisoned by its Bloody Past', *Balkan Insight* 21 February 2012: http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/vukovar-still-imprisoned-by-its-bloody-past.

53 Subotica municipal website: http://www.subotica.rs/.

54 'Subotica: 12,000 Roma citizens to arrive after readmission', Roma Transitions 2 August 2011: http://www.romatransitions.org/subotica-12-000-roma-citizens-to-arrive-after-readmission/.

55 Goran Basić and Ljubica Djordjević (2010), *EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT TO OFFICIAL USE OF LANGUAGES AND SCRIPTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA*, Belgrade: Republic of Serbia Protector of Citizens, pp.50, 54, 58-8, 61: http://www.ombudsman.org.rs/attachments/077_Report%20on%20the%200fficial%20Use%20of%20the%20Languages%20and%20Scripts%20of%20National%20Minorities.DOC.

56 Ibid., p.30.

57 National Theatre Subotica website: http://www.suteatar.org/.

58 Moonlight Programme web page: http://www.mesecina.subotica.net/program/01eng.htm.

59 Interetno Festoval website: http://interetno.net/.

festival held annually[60], as do the International Festival of Children's Theatres[61] and the PaliĆ European Film Festival[62].

In addition, there are NGOs working to provide services for minority groups in Subotica, for example:

- Local Democracy Agency – founded in 1993 to promote democracy and human rights development[63] affiliated to a network of similar agencies in Europe, the Association of Local Democracy Agencies (ALDA)[64].
- Roma Education Centre – founded in 2005 for the '*inclusion of Roma in the local environment on the territory of the Republic of Serbia'*[65].

Cultural diversity work in Subotica does not exist in a vacuum. The city is the second largest in the autonomous region of Vojvodina, which has a significant Hungarian minority. The National Council for the Hungarian Ethnic Minority (Magyar Nemzeti Tanács) is located in Subotica (Szabadka in Hungarian)[66], as is the The Scientific Association for Hungarology Research (Magyarságkutató Tudományos Társaság)[67].

The regional government of Vojvodina, located in Novi Sad, runs a programme called 'Promotion of Multiculturalism and Tolerance in Vojvodina', begun in 2005. Projects include[68]:

- "Cup of Tolerance" sport competition for young people
- Television quiz "How Well Do We Know Each Other" for secondary school students
- Museum exhibition "Homeland on the Danube – cohabitation of Germans and Serbs in Vojvodina"
- Museum exhibition "Living together" on coexistence of Serbs and Hungarians
- "Richness of Diversity" competition for the best amateur photography on the topics of multiculturalism of Vojvodina
- "Together" documentary series that, in an original manner, analyses and represents Vojvodina's diversity, as well as the common living and customs of its inhabitants
- Media Campaign – "Multiculturalism in Vojvodina"
- "Ethno Day" series of presentations of the national communities that live in Vojvodina, with their folklore, cultural, historical, culinary and other characteristics, facilitated by Vojvodina primary school pupils

Efforts towards building community cohesion in Subotica are therefore located in a context of a diverse city with strong intercultural traditions within a wider region that is engaged in working with diversity.

60 Etnofest, Subotica municipal website, accessed 1 April 2014: http://www.subotica.rs/sr/1387/etnofest.

61 Subotica International Festival of Children's Theatres website: http://www.lutfestsubotica.net/Joomla/.

62 European Film Festival website: http://www.palicfilmfestival.com/.

63 Local democracy Agency Subotica website: http://www.lda-subotica.org/eng/.

64 Association of Local Democracy Agencies website: http://www.alda-europe.eu/newSite/.

65 Roma Educational Centre website: http://ec-roma.org.rs/en/.

66 Magyar Nemzeti Tanács website: http://www.mnt.org.rs/.

67 Magyarságkutató Tudományos Társaság website: http://www.mtt.org.rs/.

68 Promotion of Multiculturalism and Tolerance project web pages, Vojvodina Autonomous Region, accessed 1 April 2014: http://www.puma.vojvodina.gov.rs/etext.php?ID_mat=1373&PHPSESSID=1gelmoion8sfn7a1od6c9cit43.



Research and Information Service
Briefing Paper

Paper 000/00 16 June 2014 NIAR 264a-14

Michael Potter

Peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Mostar and Brčko

1 Introduction

This Briefing Note supplements the Briefing Paper *Peace Building Initiatives: Examples Outside Northern Ireland*, 4 April 2014, prepared for the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in the context of scrutinising community relations policy in Northern Ireland.

The Note briefly summarises approaches to post-conflict peacebuilding in two towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Mostar in the South-West and Brčko in the North-East. The two towns have been compared due to the different approaches to peacebuilding within one country in the transition from conflict.

2 Context: A Brief Summary of the Post-Conflict Arrangements in Bosnia and Herzegovina

During the process of the break-up of Yugoslavia, the war commenced in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the constituent republics in the federation, following a declaration of independence in 1992. In broad terms, the conflict was generally depicted as one between the three main ethnic communities in the republic: Serbs, Croats and Muslims (later to be

referred to as 'Bosniaks'), although the actual conflict processes were more complex than this. The Washington Agreement in 1994 united Croat and Bosniak forces against the Serbs and the Dayton Agreement in 1995 resulted in a cessation of hostilities, with a framework for new political arrangements for the country.

Bosnia and Herzegovina comprises a complex consociational system, existing at four levels:

- A power-sharing national structure comprising the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- The power-sharing Bosniak-Croat Federation[1] and the Republika Srpska[2] entities
- Cantons within the Federation
- Municipalities in both entities

There is a significant amount of power devolved from the national government to the Federation and to the Republika Srpska.

Mostar is the main city in the Herzegovina region and a municipality with a power-sharing arrangement between the primarily Bosniak and Croat populations. Historically, Bosnian Croats have regarded Mostar as the capital of the short-lived Herceg-Bosna, a self-declared Bosnian Croat entity during the conflict, but denied the status given to the Republika Srpska at the Dayton Agreement.

Brčko is a town and district in northern Bosnia. It was given separate status within Bosnia and Herzegovina as an autonomous region, primarily due to its strategic location in the narrow strip of land (known as the Posavina Corridor) between the two parts of Republika Srpska (see the map at Appendix 1).

Both places suffered severely during the conflict.

3 Models of Peacebuilding in Mostar and Brčko

Mostar and Brčko have been compared due to their differing approaches to peacebuilding following the conflict and Brčko has drawn particular attention due to its special status within Bosnia and Herzegovina. In general terms, Brčko has been hailed a relative success for peacebuilding, while Mostar has been compared as a relative failure[3].

A range of factors have been suggested to account for the two different trajectories for areas which have had similar experiences during the conflict. Some of these can be summarised as follows:

- Institutional structures As with the country as a whole, Mostar has 'rigid consociationalism with territorial decentralisation', whereas Brčko has a form of 'flexible power-sharing'[4]. Briefly put, the arrangements in Mostar institutionalise ethnic difference in political engagement and the allocation of space, whereas power-sharing Brčko is less formal with a lack of parallel structures along ethnic lines.
- Sequencing of transformation The international community encouraged early elections and economic liberalisation in Mostar, whereas these were delayed in Brčko. The impact of this was that conflict elites were in the best position to organise for elections and to have the

1 Vlada Federacije Bosne i Hercegovine website: http://www.fbihvlada.gov.ba/bosanski/index.php.

2 Vlada Republike Srpske website: http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Pages/Default.aspx.

3 For example, Florian Bieber (2005), 'Local Institutional Engineering: A Tale of Two Cities, Mostar and Brčko', *International Peacekeeping* 12(3), 420-433.

4 Florian Bieber (2006), 'Local Institutional Engineering: A Tale of Two Cities. Mostar and Brčko' in David Chandler (ed.), *Peace Without Politics? Ten Years of International State-Building in Bosnia*, London: Routledge, p.115.

resources to exploit privatisation in Mostar, leading to political and economic domination along ethnic lines, but the delay in Brčko gave other forces time to develop[5].

- International supervision The international community has used a 'soft' protectorate role in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, whereas in Brčko, there has been a 'hard' protectorate approach[6]. This has had the effect that, while contradictory in democratic terms, the international community has had more of an opportunity to design and develop systems in Brčko with less interference from ethno-national interests.
- Shared space The strategic importance of Brčko led to it not being allocated to either the Republika Srpska or to the Federation, creating a geopolitical 'third space'[7]. This has the effect that, while ethno-national interests are still pursued in the District to a certain extent, the two entities do not have direct control over political development in Brčko.
- Integrated education Most education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is through separate schools for the three main ethnic groups in the country. In some areas of significant refugee return, various degrees of 'two schools under one roof' systems have developed, but children are still educated separately within the same building. An integrated system was introduced in Brčko in 2001-2, where now 80 percent of classroom time is mixed[8].

It should be stressed, however, that these are suggested factors for comparative progress in terms of peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Brčko is by no means in an ideal position. There have also been significant critiques of developments in Brčko. Some of these are summarised below:

- The situation in Brčko has been created through international supervision and there are questions as to the sustainability of the systems there in the longer term[9].
- Rather than acting as spheres of alternative political action or communal participation, NGOs have forged close links with international organisations or nationalist political parties to secure funding and legitimacy[10].
- The political arrangements do not seem to have significantly altered how communities regard one another: Survey data suggest that people in Brčko are no more likely to spend time with people from other ethnic identities or even to trust them than anywhere else in Bosnia and Herzegovina[11].

5 Adam Moore (2013), *Peacebuilding in Practice: Local Experience in Two Bosnian Towns*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p.4.

6 Valery Perry (2009), 'At Cross Purposes? Democratisation and Peace Implementation Strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Frozen Conflict' in *Human Rights Review* 10, 35-54.

7 Carl Dahlman and Gearóid Ó Tuathail (2006), 'Bosnia's Third Space? Nationalist Separatism and International Supervision in Bosnia' Brčko Dostrict' in *Geopolitics* 11, 651-675.

8 Janine Clark (2010), 'Education in Bosnia-Hercegovina: The Case for Root-and-Branch Reform' in *Journal of Human Rights* 9, 344-362.

9 Alex Jeffrey (2006), 'Building State Capacity in Post-Conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Case of Brčko District', *Political Geography* 25(2), 203-227.

10 Alex Jeffrey (2007), 'Geopolitical Framing of Localised Struggles: NGOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina', *Development and Change* 38(2), 251-274.

11 United Nations Development Programme (2009), *The Ties that Bind: Social Capital in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Sarajevo: UNDP, pp.38, 42.

Appendix 1: Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina





Research and Information Service
Briefing Paper

Paper 000/00 9 October 2014 NIAR 586-14

Michael Potter and Anne Campbell

Community Relations Funding in Northern Ireland

1 Introduction

This paper briefly outlines the community relations[1] funding framework for Northern Ireland in the context of the inquiry by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister into the Together: Building a United Community strategy[2].

The Together: Building a United Community strategy comprises seven headline actions[3], listed here with departmental responsibilities as allocated[4]:

1. Establishing ten new shared education campuses(Department of Education);

1 It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss terminology in relation to this area. The term 'community relations' has tended to be replaced by 'good relations' in many areas, although both terms are still in use in various contexts. 'Community relations' is used here for simplicity and does not infer preference.

2 'Inquiry into Building a United Community', Committee for OFMdFM web pages, accessed 2 October 2014: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Committees/Office-of-the-First-Minister-and-deputy-First-Minister/Inquiries/Building-a-United-Community/.

3 Northern Ireland Executive (2013), Together: Building a United Community, Belfast: NI Executive, p.9: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/together-building-a-united-community-strategy.pdf.

4 Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister: Together: Building a United Community Strategy: Update from OFMDFM Officials, 5 February 2014: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Committee-Minutes-of-Evidence/Session-2013-2014/February-2014/Together-Bilding-a-United-COmmunity-Strategy-Update-from-OFMDFM-Officials/.

2. Getting 10,000 young people, not in education, employment or training, a place on the new United Youth volunteering programme (The Department for Employment and Learning);

3. Establishing ten new shared housing schemes (Department for Social Development);

4. Developing four urban village schemes (Department for Social Development);

5. Developing a significant programme of cross-community sporting events (Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure);

6. Removing interface barriers by 2023 (Department of Justice); and

7. Pilot 100 shared summer schools by 2015 (OFMdFM).

Beyond the headline actions, government departments already have a statutory obligation to *'have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group'*[5]. In addition, individual departments may have specific programmes to promote good relations, for example, the Department of Education has allocated some £1.2 million in community relations funding annually since 2011[6].

This paper briefly summarises the allocation of community relations funding by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) and provides an overview of the funding of groups for community relations activities.

5 Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/47/contents.

6 AQW 35043/11-15 answered 9 July 2014.

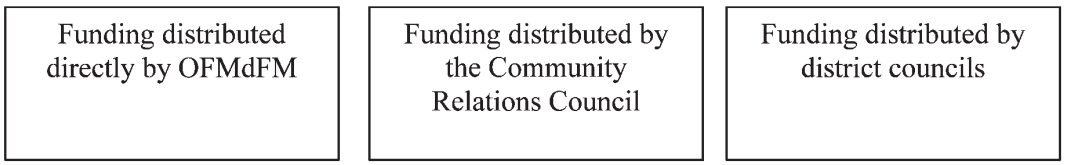
2 Community Relations Funding from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

The Community Relations Unit at OFMdFM is responsible for community relations functions as follows[7]:

- Overseeing the development of a finalised community relations strategy;
- Managing the Contested Spaces Programme (jointly funded with Atlantic Philanthropies)[8];
- Managing the District Council Good Relations Programme;
- Managing the Central Good Relations Funding Programme[9];
- Delivery of summer intervention funding to support diversionary activities at key times of community tension;
- Overseeing the delivery of the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme;
- Providing secretariat to the Flags Protocol Working Group;
- Providing secretariat to the Ex-Prisoners Working Group; and
- Providing support to and through the Community Relations Council (CRC)[10]

In broad terms, community relations funding originating from OFMdFM is distributed through the three main routes shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Overview of OFMdFM Community Relations Funding



7 Community Relations Unit, OFMdFM website, accessed 2 October 2014: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/good-relations/community-relations.htm.

8 Contested Spaces Programme web page: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/good-relations/community-relations/contested-spaces-programme.htm.

9 Central Good Relations Funding Programme: http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/equality-and-strategy/good-relations/community-relations/central-good-relations-funding-programme.htm.

10 Community Relations Council website: http://www.community-relations.org.uk/.

Table 1 sets out the allocation of funding through the various programmes administered by OFMdFM.

Table 1: Community Relations Programmes Administered by OFMdFM[11]

Programme	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
District Councils Good Relations[12]	£3,150,000.00	£3,300,000.00	£3,400,000.00	£2,800,000.00
North Belfast Strategic Good Relations	£750,785.00	£770,000.00	£770,000.00	£670,000.00
Contested Spaces Programme[13]	£617,770.00	£1,109,791.00	£1,509,567.00	£710,000.00
Central and Other Good Relations	£234,768.00	£472,000.00	£1,100,000.00	£1,321,000.00
Summer Intervention Programme[14]	£400,000.00	£536,000.00	£500,000.00	£700,000.00
Total Direct Funding	£5,153,323.00	£6,187,791.00	£7,279,567.00	£6,201,000.00
CRC Allocation	£3,588,000.00	£4,360,000.00	£3,510,000.00	£3,476,000.00
Total OFMdFM Funding	£8,741,323.00	£10,547,791.00	£10,789,567.00	£9,677,000.00

The allocation to the Community Relations Council includes funding for grants to groups for community relations activities, for community relations activities carried out directly by the Council and for organisational running costs. Grants have been distributed through the following programmes[15]:

- Community Relations and Cultural Diversity
- Research
- Core Funding
- Media
- Publications
- Pathfinder[16]

The distribution of funding to groups by district council area is shown in Table 2.

11 Information provided by OFMdFM 2 October 2014.

12 This figure is matched by district councils at 25%, therefore the figures shown here are 75% of the total programme.

13 This includes 50% match funding from Atlantic Philanthropies.

14 The Summer Intervention Programme includes annual technical transfer to the Department of Education.

15 Community Relations Council website, Funding Schemes, accessed 6 October 2014: http://www.community-relations.org.uk/funding-schemes/

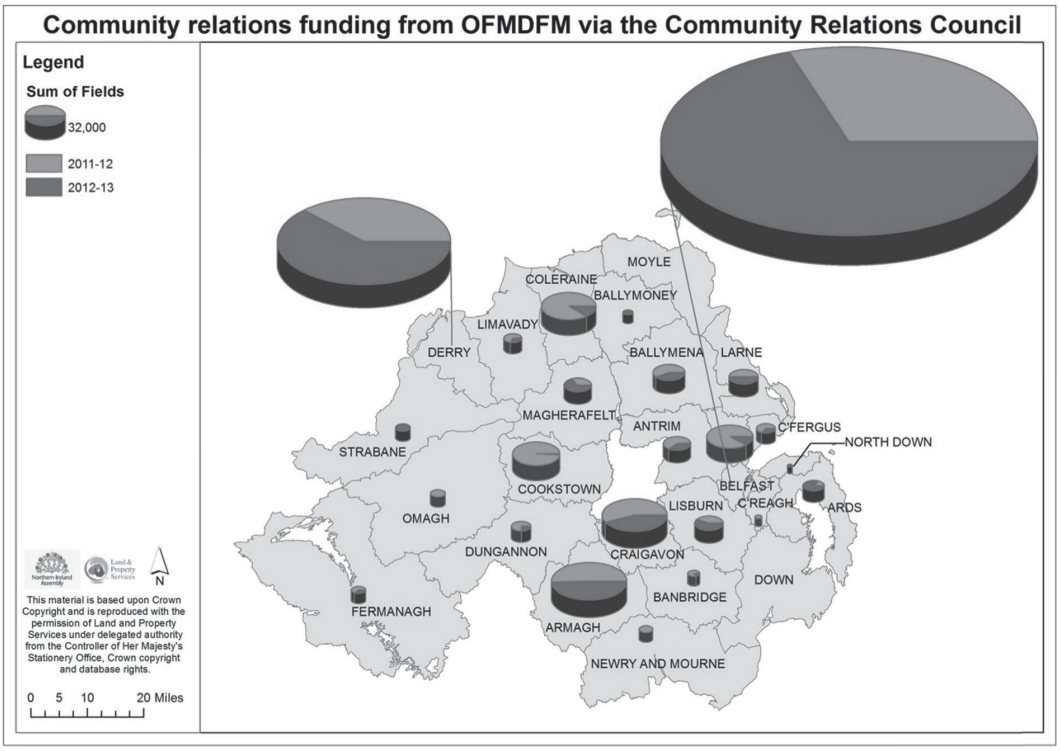
16 Pathfinder is no longer available.

Table 2: Grants Distributed by the Community Relations Council by District Council Area

	CRC 2011-12	CRC 2012-13	Total
Antrim	£9,271.44	£5,730.00	£15,001.44
Ards	£1,361.51	£7,704.66	£9,066.17
Armagh	£56,990.83	£55,814.84	£112,805.67
Ballymena	£11,606.00	£8,676.61	£20,282.61
Ballymoney		£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Banbridge	£2,480.00	£465.98	£2,945.98
Belfast	£900,010.47	£1,908,314.07	£2,808,324.54
Carrickfergus	£4,543.50	£2,500.00	£7,043.50
Castlereagh	£1,000.00		£1,000.00
Coleraine	£52,631.54	£6,510.00	£59,141.54
Cookstown	£44,134.97	£500.00	£44,634.97
Craigavon	£46,429.44	£37,461.29	£83,890.73
Derry	£237,194.23	£357,181.37	£594,375.60
Down			
Dungannon	£5,631.43	£1,800.00	£7,431.43
Fermanagh	£2,685.00	£1,522.80	£4,207.80
Larne	£8,500.00	£8,500.00	£17,000.00
Limavady	£4,500.00	£2,000.00	£6,500.00
Lisburn	£6,965.55	£9,141.25	£16,106.80
Magherafelt	£5,296.40	£9,742.00	£15,038.40
Moyle			
Newry and Mourne	£3,565.92		£3,565.92
Newtownabbey	£38,678.69	£4,234.13	£42,912.82
North Down		£500.00	£500.00
Omagh	£4,418.00		£4,418.00
Strabane		£4,250.00	£4,250.00
Multiple Councils	£637,606.20	£351,663.57	£989,269.77
All Councils	£74,115.00	£41,766.30	£115,881.30
Total	**£2,159,616.12**	**£2,827,978.87**	**£4,987,594.99**

This information is represented in the following map. Distribution is uneven across district councils, with some council areas seeing no funding to groups for one or both of the years for which figures are available. There are also substantial differences between the council areas for sums drawn down as grants. It should be noted that there are also projects funded across all councils and across more than one council which have not been attributed to the council areas on the map.

Appendices 1 and 2 detail community relations grants to groups, broken down by district council area[17].



The District Council Good Relations Programme is allocated at 75% and match funded 25% by the councils themselves. A proportion of the money funds one or more Good Relations Officer posts and of the programme costs, some is allocated in grants to groups and the rest is used by the council directly.

Grants are distributed differently by the various councils, some issuing large numbers of small grants and others fewer but larger grants. For example, in the years 2011/12 to 2013/14 Antrim Borough Council issued six grants to five organisations, reflecting low uptake, so most projects are delivered through partnership arrangements[18]. The six grant amounted to £11,566.99 over three years of a programme worth £134,032.80[19], representing a very small proportion of the overall programme (9%). By contrast Ballymoney Borough Council has issued £37,010.00 in mostly smaller grants to 63 different organisations during the same period[20] from a programme worth £199,657.50[21] (19%). On average, councils tend to spend a relatively small part of their community relations funding on grants.

17 The appendices are taken from the last two published annual reports: 2011-12 and 2012-13.

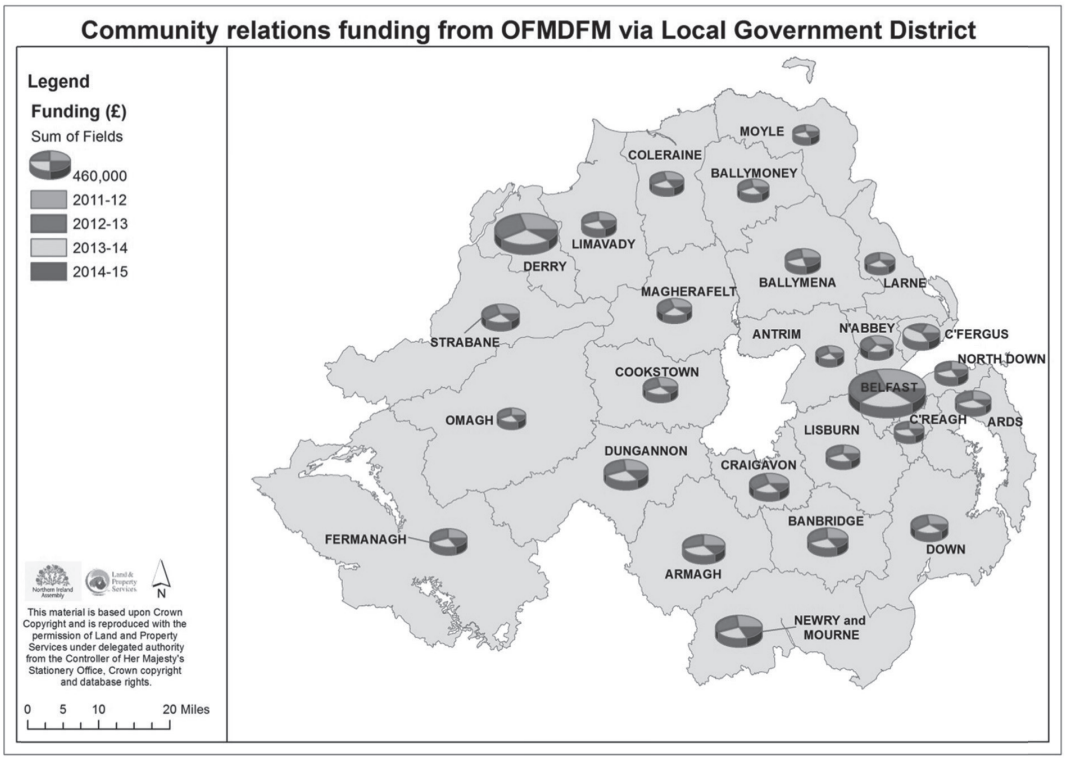
18 Information from Antrim Borough Council 22 September 2014.

19 Calculated from 75% programme costs (see Appendix 3).

20 Information from Ballymoney Borough Council 22 September 2014.

21 Calculated from 75% programme costs (see Appendix 3).

The following map shows the distribution of community relations funding from OFMdFM to local councils for the years 2011/12 to 2014/15.



In comparison with funds distributed by the Community Relations Council, there is significantly more uniformity across district council areas, although it is important to note that funding via the Community Relations Council route is by open application, whereas only a small proportion of district council funding is distributed by this method.

Appendix 3 details allocations to each council under the Programme since 2011, showing salary and programme costs.

Appendix 1: Community Relations Grant Awards from the Community Relations Council 2012– 2013[22]

Belfast			
111113	Upper Ardoyne Youth Club	Single-identity CR residential programme.	1,160.00
111302	Healing Through Remembering	Expand participation in the Day of Reflection and raise further awareness in community and media spheres.	2,000.00
111386	1st North Belfast Historical and Cultural Society	Grant awarded to increase understanding of Irish History through a series of discussions between Republican and Loyalist participants.	600.00
111390	LiDS	A project working with 13 young people from all parts of Belfast over a 8 month period looking at cultural diversity within Belfast.	62.93
111414	Ullans Academy Ltd	Grant awarded to support a St Patrick's Celebratory Breakfast to support a greater understanding of Ulster Scots/Ulster Gaelic heritage and culture.	375.00
111415	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Cross-community Laganside women's event to coincide with the ICTU Women's Conference at the Waterfront Hall.	750.00
111506	174 Trust	Community relations development programme for senior staff and board members.	875.00
121508	Shankill Women's Centre	Research project into local attitudes to Peace Lines at Lower Shankill and Lower Falls to enable the development of a CR plan for 2012 and fully shared space at the interface.	8,513.75
121509	Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne	Residential culture workshops and historical site visits exploring both NI traditions with a group of Protestant men from Upper Ardoyne.	1,982.50
121510	Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre	Education and Training Programme for 10 young people from interface areas on the shared history of Belfast.	5,000.00
121512	Culturlann McAdam O Fiaich	Good relations workshop and CR Audit.	1,500.00
121525	di-Verse (Poets Against Racism)	Inclusion Festival event 'Celebrating Diversity' through music, poetry and the spoken word.	550.00
121526	Belfast Media Group	Conference promoting excellence, raising awareness of cultural diversity, encouraging tourism and investment and building international relationships.	5,000.00
121527	Bothar Ard	An exploration of the history of Belfast from 1912-2012 across all communities through an Irish Language documentary with English subtitles.	4,000.00
121528	North Belfast Women's Initiative and Support Group (NBWISP)	Project aims to build skills and capacity of volunteers and management Committee of NBWISP to help address issues that are divisive within the surrounding communities.	875.00

22 Community Relations Council Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13: http://www.community-relations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CRC-Annual-report_Layout-1-4.pdf.

121537	**West Kirk Community Project**	**Cross-community project focused on encouraging marginalised young men to embrace positive changes to their lifestyle choices.**	**1,524.15**
121556	Queen's Film Theatre	Film Festival designed, programmed and run by a team of young people from different backgrounds addressing youth and cultural diversity.	2,500.00
121567	**Irish Congress of Trade Unions**	**May Day Festival raising awareness on sectarian and racist issues.**	**2,065.00**
121572	The Bytes Project	Pilot programme aimed at addressing interface violence and related issues between divided communities.	2,250.00
121580	**Success Dragon and Lion Dance Association**	**Cultural festival which gives local ethnic minority groups the opportunity to introduce their culture to a wider audience through the medium of dance and music.**	**3,600.00**
121585	Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	Grant awarded for Arts festival showcasing multi-cultural events and promoting Belfast City Centre as a shared space.	3,765.93
121588	**Unionist Centenary**	**Project aiming to commemorate the historic event of The Balmoral Review.**	**3,800.00**
121590	Open Hands	Project aiming to raise awareness of good relations work between interface communities.	925.00
121608	**Giving Life Opportunities to Women (GLOW)**	**Multi-cultural project bringing together women from interface communities, different faiths and cultures.**	**1,500.00**
121612	Belfast Metropolitan College	CR training residential.	1,482.70
121615	**Cinemagic Ltd**	**Project promoting the exploration of cultural awareness and dialogue through the medium of film making.**	**2,700.00**
121616	Festival of Fools Ltd	International Street Theatre Festival exploring themes of diversity.	2,500.00
121617	**Middle Andersonstown Festival**	**Single identity educational programme exploring Irish History.**	**1,072.00**
121618	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Women from both main communities and migrant women chart their experiences of living at the Lagan and look at the changing shape of community, education and work.	701.00
121619	**Summer Madness**	**Inter-church youth event aimed at promoting community relations through engagement with local communities across Belfast.**	**3,000.00**
121620	Belfast Metropolitan College	Grant awarded for CR week community relations event to enable local people and the ethnic minority community to learn more about each others' culture.	350.00

121623	**Northern Ireland Children's Enterprise**	**CR training programme for volunteers.**	**1,780.00**
121624	Women's Information Northern Ireland	Joint project between women's groups from Belfast, South Armagh and ethnic communities sharing personal stories of the conflict in NI.	2,979.45
121625	**Women's Information Northern Ireland**	**Residential/conference for women's groups from urban/rural communities to come together to share personal stories of the conflict in NI and give peace-building ideas.**	**5,000.00**
121634	Women In Faith	Run a series of CR events aimed at promoting understanding and debate between women from different backgrounds.	1,590.00
121642	**ArtsEkta**	**Belfast Mela 2012 - Multi-cultural festival promoting diversity and engagement.**	**7,060.00**
121648	1st North Belfast Historical and Cultural Society	Promote greater understanding of the World Wars between divided communities and learn about the sacrifice of both traditions.	2,680.00
121653	**Anti-Racism World Cup**	**Inter-cultural football tournament.**	**1,736.74**
121655	Place of Victory for All Nations	Exhibitions and performances of the various cultures represented in Belfast.	4,303.42
121661	**Pobal**	**Engaging Irish Speakers in a showcase event marking the anniversary of the Ulster Hall and highlighting the excellence of the Irish language, Gaidhlig arts and cultural diversity.**	**3,775.00**
121664	One World Creative	An event that aims to display, celebrate and share Chinese culture.	2,000.00
121669	**Northern Ireland Council for Refugees and Asylum Seekers**	**Residential programme aimed at building good relations between members of different communities.**	**3,000.00**
121670	Ugandan Community in N.I.	A multi-cultural celebration to mark Ugandan Independence Day.	970.00
121677	**All Nations Ministries**	**Community picnic enabling group members to develop opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of other cultures, beliefs and traditions in order to increase their acceptance and respect diversity.**	**725.00**
121679	East Belfast Mission	Project aiming to examine areas of common heritage between both main traditions in Northern Ireland.	1,500.00
121681	**The Fellowship of Messines Association**	**Loyalist and Republican participants engaging in two one night residential seminars exploring the theme of Questions of Citizenship and Identity in a Shared Society and Future.**	**4,261.10**

121688	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Event aiming to promote Shared Neighbourhood Week.	3,148.23
121691	**Tides Training**	**Residential aiming to promote dialogue and understanding of cultural traditions.**	**4,110.00**
121695	Contemporary Christianity NI Ltd	Project aiming to encourage public debate and improve understanding of key historical events in Irish history.	4,900.00
121706	**An Droichead**	**Music and cultural festival which aims to promote tolerance and respect between South Belfast's different cultural communities.**	**1,250.00**
121713	North Belfast Interface Network	Interface project aimed at bringing communities together as part of arts programme.	1,400.00
121714	**Feile An Phobail**	**Drama performance examining the prominent dates in Northern Ireland's history.**	**4,373.47**
121720	Prime Cut Productions	Theatre Production exploring the impact of the Peace Walls in Belfast.	5,000.00
121741	**Women's Common Paths Network**	**Research project exploring identity in Northern Ireland.**	**4,610.89**
121742	Culture Night Belfast	A series of cultural and arts events in Belfast.	4,570.00
121746	**Women's Tec**	**A series of events to celebrate International Women's Day.**	**7,500.00**
121747	Charter for Northern Ireland	Multi-ethnic football event addressing sectarianism/racism.	4,000.00
121758	**Arts for All**	**To bring together individuals from different backgrounds through facilitated art workshops and dialogue.**	**1,704.40**
121772	Peace and Reconciliation Group	Let's Talk Politics and Talk Back Events with CR focus for young people.	3,742.50
121776	**Belfast Women's Interface Network**	**Joint project between three women's groups from interface communities exploring female historical figures.**	**4,851.86**
121781	Upper Ardoyne Women's Group (UAWG)	Cultural Diversity and Awareness Programme.	2,500.00
121785	**Irish Association for Social Cultural and Economic Relations**	**Event examining key historical events and their impact on community relations.**	**717.50**
121792	Belfast International Comedy Festival	To hold a seminar: Laughing away our troubles? examining comedy and conflict in Northern Ireland.	1,320.00

121794	**Upper Ardoyne Youth centre**	**Diversionary programme aiming to reduce the potential for young people getting involved in community conflict.**	**1,250.00**
121801	Markets Development Association	Cross-community event exploring the history of the Irish language.	1,795.00
121802	**Arts for All**	**Study visits/workshops for diverse communities aiming to explore local contested history.**	**2,500.00**
121803	Unionist Centenary	Project aiming to commemorate the historic event of the Signing of the Ulster Covenant.	1,750.00
121807	**Belfast Reconciliation Network**	**A series of events exploring the history of the Ulster Covenant and its meaning today.**	**1,597.50**
121809	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Project aiming to develop cross-community networks within a shared community.	2,000.00
121810	**Ballynafeigh Community Development Association**	**Project aiming to develop cross-community networks within a shared community.**	**4,600.00**
121816	South Belfast Malecare	Cultural identity course.	2,783.65
121822	**Adullam Christian Ministries**	**Conference aimed at promoting dialogue and understanding between women from different community and ethnic backgrounds.**	**3,634.00**
121823	St Oliver Plunkett Parish	Inter-church project seeking to develop dialogue between members of different faith communities.	80.00
121839	**Northern Ireland Tolerance Educational and Cultural Association (NI-TECA)**	**Intercultural and Interfaith Dinner - bringing people from different religions together to discuss issues of identity and culture.**	**1,500.00**
121843	Carrick Hill Resident's Association	Programme aimed at providing community activity programmes that assist in reducing interface tensions and promote good relations.	2,017.00
121862	**Suffolk/Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG)**	**Strategic planning residential.**	**1,060.00**
121873	Belfast Cleaning Society	To provide in-depth training that will provide deeper knowledge and broader practical skills in creating a strong anti-sectarian ethos and practice based on a range of peace and reconciliation themes.	2,475.00
121875	**Belfast City Vineyard**	**Exploring the history of the Book of Kells to educate people about their shared heritage, engaging people in discussion about unity in faith and creativity.**	**1,000.00**

121876	Asian 50 Plus Club	To host a social event for members of Catholic and Protestant Seniors on 27th March 2013.	429.00
121878	**Aisling Ghear Theatre Co**	**Play - examining key historical figures from both traditions that have impacted on the development of the Irish Language.**	**2,180.00**
121883	The Spectrum Centre (Greater Shankill Partnership)	Community play exploring events in Northern Ireland's history.	3,500.00
121884	**Ligoniel Family Centre**	**Democracy programme aiming to address CR issues within interface communities.**	**1,905.00**
121886	Inner East Belfast Local Area Network	Shared communities residential for local community activists.	2,180.00
121894	**ArtsEkta**	**An Inter-cultural arts event showcasing Indian culture and celebrating cultural diversity.**	**1,000.00**
121895	Forthspring Inter Community Group	Strategic planning residential.	2,495.10
121901	**Etcetera Theatre Company**	**To prepare a short business/development plan for the theatre company and hold a script development day.**	**1,200.00**
121906	NI Civil Service Sports Association	Sports based CR programme bringing together participants from different communities.	1,075.40
121909	**di-Verse (Poets Against Racism)**	**A one day multicultural music and spoken word event for young people.**	**800.00**
121911	Love Music Hate Racism	A one day community conference and music workshop for people from different communities to come together and challenge racism.	2,000.00
121915	**Indian Community Centre**	**Workshop and festival exploring the links between Indian and other cultures.**	**600.00**
121918	Belfast South Community Resources	Community relations workshops and cultural trips.	790.00
		Total for Belfast	**220,236.17**
Carrickfergus			
121515	**Carrickfergus Somme Society**	**Cross-border single identity educational programme to explore shared history and linkages between the North and South of Ireland.**	**2,500.00**
		Total for Carrickfergus	**2,500.00**
Coleraine			
121607	UNESCO Centre	Project aiming to develop teaching resources to enable critical reflection of key historical events commemorated from 2012-2022.	2,500.00

121611	**Big Telly Theatre Company**	**Arts based community relations programme aiming to promote dialogue and understanding between differing communities.**	**4,010.00**
		Total for Coleraine	**6,510.00**
Cookstown			
121591	Loup Women's Group	Cross-community event to build relationships (Part of CR week).	500.00
		Total for Cookstown	**500.00**
Craigavon			
121560	**St Vincent De Paul**	**CR residential for a range of families from the Craigavon area.**	**4,000.00**
121745	ECF Links	Project aiming to find new ways to engage with groups of adults from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds in Lurgan/Craigavon.	1,514.28
121760	**Richmount Rural Community Association**	**Multi-cultural festival.**	**1,208.00**
121767	Community Outreach Group	A series of events addressing Irish History accompanied with site visits to places of historical interest.	1,250.00
121867	**Craigavon Intercultural Programme**	**To create a DVD focusing on the integration experience of minority-ethnic females.**	**2,412.37**
		Total for Craigavon	**10,384.65**
Derry			
111266	Teach Na Failte	Single-identity youth work residential for ex-combatants and young people.	5.00
121513	**INCORE**	**Political Studies Association Conference in April 2012 for policymakers, practitioners and wider sections of the public.**	**1,000.00**
121517	Belfast Exposed Photography	To use photography as a tool to engage communities in discussions around identity, ethnicity and social life.	2,495.08
121554	**Children in Crossfire**	**Cross-community educational project for 20 young adults in developing as global citizens within a divided society.**	**4,688.00**
121573	INCORE	INCORE 2012 Summer School addressing issues of peace building and conflict resolution.	4,949.13
121586	**Greater Shantallow Community Arts**	**CR Week event seeking to promote positive cultural expression and awareness**	**3,300.00**
121587	Stravaganza Production Company	Project bringing divided communities together to reduce sectarianism, racism and intolerance through facilitated workshops and exhibition.	3,486.88

121600	**Christ Church Parish**	**To produce theatre workshops addressing the legacy of the movement of Protestants from the west bank of Derry.**	**4,000.00**
121603	Cathedral Youth Club	A series of events to mark Community Relations Week.	1,913.16
121610	**The Junction**	**Project aiming to develop a City of Sanctuary in the City of Derry leading up to the UK City Culture 2013.**	**3,700.00**
121644	Fountain Dance Association	Workshops exploring cultural dance.	504.00
121660	**In Your Space**	**International Street Theatre Festival.**	**2,500.00**
121667	Peace and Reconciliation Group	Organisational review process examining the group's strategic direction in relation to their community relations programmes.	2,240.30
121678	**Eglinton Community Limited**	**Project aiming to recruit 20 young men to complete two - 2 hour facilitated workshops at the Nerve Centre on sport, diversity, symbols and flags.**	**450.00**
121689	Inter-Faith Northwest	To run a series of events which promote dialogue and greater understanding between the faith traditions in Northern Ireland.	398.98
121711	**APAC (Associated Photography for Art and Culture)**	**A Citizens Wallpaper to gather and disseminate information and appreciate the different cultures living in the NW area of Derry.**	**3,750.00**
121715	Gasyard Wall Feile	Community Festival aimed at promoting cultural diversity and community engagement.	3,548.57
121717	**Churches In Co-Operation**	**Project aiming to develop relationships between different faith communities in the North-West.**	**2,432.55**
121775	The Junction Community Relations Resource and Peace Building Centre	Series of inter-community dialogues examining the themes of the Decade of Commemorations.	2,385.00
121780	**Peace and Reconciliation Group**	**Let's Talk Politics with CR focus for young people.**	**2,500.00**
121800	Punjabi Cultural Association	Diwali celebration.	1,781.05
121841	**North West Play Resource Centre**	**Theatre performance exploring the impact of the conflict on victims and survivors.**	**1,292.50**
121871	Gasyard Wall Feile	Programme aiming to provide CR awareness training for group volunteers.	923.00
		Total for Derry	**54,243.20**

Dungannon and South Tyrone			
121601	Cunningham's Lane Residents Association	A series of activities building relationships between the wider communities.	1,800.00
		Total for Dungannon and South Tyrone	**1,800.00**
Fermanagh			
121609	**Fermanagh Churches Forum**	**A series of events aimed at improving community relations between faith-based communities in the Fermanagh area.**	1,522.80
		Total for Fermanagh	**1,522.80**
Larne			
121597	Cairncastle LOL 692 Community and Cultural Group	Ulster Scots Folk Festival promoting Ulster Scots, multi-culturalism and community cohesion through music.	3,500.00
121640	**Dalriada Festival Committee**	**Festival aiming to bring together members of differing communities living in the Glenarm area.**	5,000.00
		Total for Larne	**8,500.00**
Limavady			
121559	North West Tongues Tones and Tapping	A series of cultural diversity events taking place in CR week.	2,000.00
		Total for Limavady	**2,000.00**
Lisburn			
111440	**Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership**	**Project aiming to promote good relations and dialogue with ex-combatants.**	570.00
111441	Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership	Project aiming to improve relations and community involvement of ethnic minority communities living in Greater Dunmurry area.	55.00
111442	**Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership**	**Project aiming to run a series of community relations events involving a range of young adults and senior citizens.**	884.25
121532	Atlas Women's Centre	To produce educational material researching and exploring the history and meanings behind traditional, well known songs and music loved or loathed.	2,470.00
121716	**Hillsborough International Oyster Festival**	**Multi-cultural parade through Hillsborough village as part of the International Oyster Festival to improve understanding an acceptance of other cultures by the local community.**	3,612.00

121764	Dunmurry Community Association	Community event aimed at bringing together members of diverse communities to promote better understanding and relationships.	1,550.00
		Total for Lisburn	**9,141.25**
Magherafelt			
121582	**Church Street Community Association**	**A 4 day community festival aimed at bridging cultural diversity within the area.**	**700.00**
121704	Lower Castledawson Community Association	Community Leadership Training Programme.	4,992.00
121743	**Bellaghy Women's Group**	**A 10 week programme aimed at encouraging discussion around CR issues.**	**1,005.00**
121753	Curragh Hall Development Association	Community festival featuring a range of activities promoting cultural diversity.	1,500.00
121890	**Desertmartin AOH**	**To host the annual AOH celebration for St Patrick's day in Magherafelt.**	**1,545.00**
		Total for Magherafelt	**9,742.00**
Multiple Areas			
121558	School of Law	Prison Officer Oral History Pilot Project.	4,969.83
121565	**Healing Through Remembering**	**Grant awarded for Day of Reflection evaluation.**	**2,500.00**
121568	Rural Community Network	CR Week event aiming to hold a facilitated community dialogue examining the issues of flags and emblems.	1,341.50
121575	**Charter for Northern Ireland**	**Sports festival aiming to promote anti-racism and anti-hate crime.**	**3,841.00**
121576	Disabled Police Officers Association NI	Residential to Donegal and Daytrip to Bessbrook/Newry and Banbridge to explore Irish History and Culture.	5,000.00
121577	**Artlinks**	**Cross-cultural collaboration to encourage links between the Polish and indigenous communities.**	**1,500.00**
121578	Rural Community Network	A short scoping study examining the key issues on policing and young people in rural communities.	2,400.00
121594	**Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd**	**Project aiming to develop dialogue between Loyalists and Republicans through a political Think Tank initiative.**	**5,000.00**
121606	LINC Resource Centre	To run a developmental programme working with women from urban and rural settings.	1,250.00
121614	**Gig'n The Bann Festival Committee**	**Community festival aiming to promote Irish and Ulster Scots tradition through music and dance.**	**3,000.00**
121635	Community Dialogue	Delivery of a range of user-friendly dialogue techniques designed to attract previously unreachable communities and individuals.	2,142.13

121641	**LINC Resource Centre**	**Run a community relations training programme for community activists.**	**2,017.25**
121658	NIACRO	Residential at Corrymeela to bring people from different cultures together to break down prejudice and build positive relationships with the families of prisoners.	2,250.00
121686	**Green Shoot Productions**	**The presentation of the play which explores the current state of Ulster Unionism and Loyalism through the prism of Ian Paisley's Life with accompanying outreach programme.**	**4,200.00**
121701	Mindwise Banbridge and Lurgan	Cultural diversity training to build the capacity of participants to work with culturally diverse members.	2,855.00
121752	**Tinderbox Theatre Company**	**Outreach programme to accompany a new play exploring issues within contemporary Northern Ireland Society.**	**2,500.00**
121783	Spanner in the Works Theatre Company	To create a play focusing on human trafficking in Northern Ireland and explore associated issues and cultural awareness with communities and schools.	1,977.00
121799	**Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd**	**Project aiming to develop dialogue between Loyalists, Republicans and other groups through a political Think Tank initiative.**	**5,000.00**
121805	Dialogue for Diversity	Residential to encourage dialogue between divided communities.	3,233.60
121814	**Sliabh Beagh Cross Border Partnership**	**Community Leadership Programme aiming to develop better community relations.**	**3,198.00**
121846	LINC Resource Centre	Fortnightly meetings with community, voluntary, statutory and political representatives to examine a number of key issues important to local communities.	1,143.65
121888	**Londonderry YMCA**	**To produce a joint leaflet between the Londonderry YMCA and Sports clubs in the North West region that will encourage everyone, regardless of perceived background to become involved in local sports clubs.**	**1,620.00**
121892	D U Dance	A peer leadership programme to deliver dance and related activities across diverse cultures.	2,230.00
121913	**Irish School of Ecumenics**	**Conference themed - "Faith and Politics: New Questions for the 21st Century".**	**722.75**
		Total for Multiple	**65,891.71**
Newtownabbey			
111337	Naomh Eanna CLG	Project aiming to engage community participation in gaelic sports, language and cultural activities in the Newtownabbey area, leading to a shared space project.	2,300.00

121786	**Queenspark Women's Group**	**Strategic planning residential.**	**3,710.00**
		Total for Newtownabbey	**6,010.00**
North Down			
121910	Holywood Shared Town	Multi-cultural day.	500.00
		Total for North Down	**500.00**
Strabane			
121685	**Border Arts 2000**	**Showcase concert and exhibition illustrating the role of propaganda, literature and music in conflict.**	**4,250.00**
		Total for Strabane	**4,250.00**
		Overall Total	**443,313.52**

Research Grant Awards 2012 – 2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Areas			
111507	Institute for Conflict Research	An examination of the connections between Human Rights, Equality and Community Relations.	12,500.00
		Total for All	**12,500.00**
Belfast			
121961	**Institute for Conflict Research**	**Research into New Media and young people in Interface areas.**	**7,250.00**
		Total for Belfast	**7,250.00**
Derry			
121960	Rev Earl Storey	Research into what role commemorations play in promoting Good Relations.	6,000.00
		Total for Derry	**6,000.00**
		Overall Total	**25,750.00**

Core Funding Grant Scheme Awards 2012-2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
Armagh			
121308	REACT	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	38,374.82
		Total for Armagh	**38,374.82**
Belfast			
121306	**Irish School of Ecumenics**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,759.00**
121309	Belfast Interface Project	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	68,873.72
121310	**Workers Educational Association**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**56,978.02**
121311	174 Trust	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	24,939.51
121312	**Interaction Belfast**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**56,026.32**
121314	Intercomm	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	23,838.82
121315	**North Belfast Interface Network**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**62,266.43**
121316	Groundwork NI	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	26,847.17
121317	**LINC Resource Centre**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**88,634.91**
121356	Suffolk/Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG)	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	28,909.38
121370	**Lower Shankill Community Association**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**31,661.97**
121371	Community Dialogue	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	76,938.97
121375	**Training for Women Network**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**32,897.90**
121729	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	38,908.97
121730	**Partisan Productions**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,636.30**
121755	Mediation Northern Ireland	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	64,196.80
		Total for Belfast	**735,314.19**
Craigavon			
121359	**ECF Links**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,032.64**
		Total for Craigavon	**26,032.64**

Derry			
121305	Rural Community Network	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	42,313.98
121727	**Peace & Reconciliation Group**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**87,452.69**
121731	The Junction/Holywell Trust	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	84,004.06
121732	**The Nerve Centre**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**18,404.07**
		Total for Derry	**232,174.80**
Multiple			
121726	Trademark	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	59,686.86
121733	**Corrymeela Community**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**135,119.00**
121738	Institute for Conflict Research	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	31,701.00
121751	**Tides Training**	**Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**42,400.00**
		Total for Multiple	**268,906.86**
Newtownabbey			
121313	Community Relations Forum	Grant for core funding costs to support community relations activity.	33,374.51
		Total for Newtownabbey	**33,374.51**
		Overall Total	**1,334,177.82**

Media Grant Awards 2012 – 2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
Antrim			
121929	Goldsmith Broadcast	A short feature film on the life of one of the most integrated estates in NI - Springfarm.	4,770.00
		Total for Antrim	**4,770.00**
Derry			
121932	**Besom Productions Ltd**	**Develop a book of evidence and materials for the Trial of Lundy website.**	**13,800.00**
		Total for Derry	**13,800.00**
Multiple Areas			
121927	Diversity Challenges	To adapt the film "Life as an Interface" and develop an interactive web based training resource together with some written materials.	5,750.00
121930	**Disruptive Media**	**In partnership with Healing Through Remembering -make 30 - 40 short films based on 4Thought.TV (Ch4) - involving an object to tell personal experiences of the conflict with dissemination via the web.**	**7490.00**
121931	Queens University	Prison Memory Archive - create interactive access using a series of themes to explore 30 representative and inclusive recordings of walk and talk interviews at the Armagh, Maze and Longkesh prisons involving prison officers, staff and ex-prisoners.	3,625.00
		Total for Multiple	**16,865.00**
		Overall Total	**35,435**

Publications Grant Awards 2012-2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Areas			
121592	Belfast Interface Project	Publication of 'Belfast Interfaces: Security Barriers and Defensive Use of Space'.	2,730.00
121595	**Yes! Publications**	**Publication of 'Signing Up to the Covenant - But Which One?'**	**3,290.00**
121598	Ulster Historical Foundation	Publication of 'Dissenting Voices'- Rediscovering the Irish Progressive Presbyterian Tradition	3,000.00
121599	**Ulster Historical Foundation**	**Publication of 'Friends in High Places: Ulster's Resistance to Irish Home Rule 1912-14'.**	**4,000.00**
121675	Four Courts Press	Publication of 'Alice Milligan and the Irish Cultural Revival'.	2,500.00
121676	**Minority Focus**	**Publication of 'Minority Focus' magazine (3 issues).**	**4,735.00**
121790	The Ulster Folk	Publication of the Ulster Folk Newspaper (3 issues).	3,000.00
121847	**Island Publication**	**Publication of 'Towards a Shared Future' booklets - ' The Difficult Questions' and 'Confronting Sectarianism'.**	**890.00**
121924	Gaslight Productions	Publication of new edition of 'Epilogues' workbook.	2,988.00
		Total for All	**27,133.00**
		Overall Total	**27,133.00**

Pathfinder Grant Awards 2012-2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
Armagh			
121650	REACT	Grant awarded for project aiming to reduce community tensions and promote positive cultural expression.	2,377.75
		Total for Armagh	**2,377.75**
Ballymena			
111229	**Mediation Northern Ireland**	**Grant awarded for mediation project aiming to reduce the potential for community conflict during the summer period.**	**3,421.08**
		Total for Ballymena	**3,421.08**
Belfast			
111134	Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre	Summer Intervention Programme aimed at producing diversionary activities.	775.00
111407	**Falls Community Council**	**Salary costs over a fixed period of time for a worker to further develop an inter-community project previously supported by IFI Community Bridges.**	**8,750.00**
111409	Intercomm	Project aiming to design a peace building framework to provide safe neighbourhoods and peaceful interfaces.	13,850.47
121511	**Ligoniel Improvement Association**	**A three month diversionary programme tackling issues of sectarianism and anti-social behaviour in interface areas.**	**2,283.00**
121593	Suffolk/Lenadoon Interface Group (SLIG)	A summer soccer event involving young adults from different interface communities.	860.00
121629	**Basement Youth Club**	**Cross-community 5 day residential for young people from interface areas.**	**1,250.00**
121633	Interaction Belfast	To run a mobile phone network involving community volunteers representing interface communities.	2,620.00
121637	**Markets Development Association**	**Project aiming to reduce the potential for interface conflict during the summer period.**	**3,153.80**
121643	Belfast Orangefest	Support towards carnival based activities to encourage people from all sections of the community to experience events surrounding the 12th celebrations in Belfast City Centre.	3,500.00
121668	**Tar Isteach**	**Community event aimed at promoting positive community relations and reducing community tensions during the summer period.**	**4,000.00**

121708	Woodvale and Cambria Youth and Community Association	Grant awarded for project aimed at addressing interface conflict and promoting a positive alternative to contentious cultural expression.	7,945.00
121721	**North Belfast Interface Network**	**Interface mobile phone network aimed at reducing tensions within interface areas at key times of the year.**	**2,860.08**
121722	St John Bosco Boxing Club	Summer intervention programme aimed at providing diversionary activities for young adults.	1,760.00
121725	**South West Action Group**	**Support towards two interface workers' posts.**	**33,175.41**
121734	Community Foundation for Northern Ireland	Support towards the "Prisoners 2 Peace" and "Conflict Transformation from the Bottom Up" programmes.	786,500.00
121740	**Marrowbone Community Association**	**Project aiming to reduce the potential for interface conflict during the summer period.**	**3,800.00**
121754	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Support towards completion of community interdependence programme.	36,197.00
121798	**Ardoyne Fleadh Project**	**Diversionary event aiming to reduce the potential of community conflict.**	**5,000.00**
121804	Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	Youth programme aimed at engaging young people living in interface areas.	16,271.00
121806	**New Lodge Youth Centre (Ashton Community Trust)**	**Intervention programme aiming to reduce the potential for community conflict during a key period of heightened community tension.**	**1,716.95**
121808	Markets Development Association	Intervention programme aiming to reduce the potential of interface conflict.	2,746.00
121819	**Black Mountain Shared Space**	**Project aiming to assist with the development of a shared space programme involving a range of interface communities.**	**6,500.00**
		Total for Belfast	**945,513.71**
Craigavon			
121605	Epworth Methodist Church Bonfire Group	Grant awarded for event aimed at reducing community tensions during a key summer period.	1,044.00
		Total for Craigavon	**1,044.00**
Derry			
121656	**St Columb's Park House**	**Support towards ongoing development of CR programmes.**	**39,364.37**

121712	Maiden City Festival Committee	Project aiming to develop cross-community understanding and dialogue.	5,000.00
121739	**Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership**	**Summer Diversionary Programme aimed at reducing community tensions.**	**4,600.00**
		Total for Derry	**48,964.37**
Magherafelt			
121583	Maghera Sons Of William Flute Band	Grant awarded for diversionary community event aimed at reducing community tensions.	500.00
		Total for Magherafelt	**500.00**
Multiple Areas			
121680	**Northern Ireland Alternatives**	**Support towards Action for Community Transformation project.**	**16,000.00**
		Total for Multiple	**16,000.00**
Newtownabbey			
121602	Hydepark Historical And Cultural Society	Project aiming to encourage a greater knowledge of history and culture within the group and improve ability to connect with other communities.	560.00
121665	**Rathcoole Churches Community Group**	**Summer intervention programme aimed at reducing the potential for inter-community conflict.**	**2,396.62**
		Total for Newtownabbey	**2,956.62**
		Overall Total	**1,020,777.53**

Appendix 2: Community Relations Grant Awards from the Community Relations Council 2011-2012[23]

Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Grant Scheme 2011-2012

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Councils			
111158	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Cultural Diversity training and outreach programme on education pack - 'I came here for .....'.	2,500.00
111252	**Charter for Northern Ireland**	**Sports festival aiming to promote anti-racism and anti-hate crime.**	**3,551.00**
111378	Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd	Project aiming to develop dialogue between differing communities through political Think Tank.	5,000.00
		Total for All Councils	**11,051.00**
Antrim Borough Council			
111244	**Carrickfergus Community Forum**	**Cultural awareness programme including range of visits to sites of historical importance.**	**2,521.44**
111301	Glebeside Community Association	Positive engagement programme aimed at developing ownership of shared history culture and identity.	4,500.00
111336	**Randalstown Cultural Aware**	**Residential to focus on exploring challenging issues in relation to cultural and historical engagement.**	**1,000.00**
111347	Springfarm and District Community Association	Cross-community Leadership training programme.	1,250.00
		Total for Antrim	**9,271.44**
Ards Borough Council			
111269	**North Down Community Assistance**	**Capacity building project aiming to enable communities to engage with wider community through cultural project.**	**1,361.51**
		Total for Ards	**1,361.51**
Armagh City and District Council			
110987	The John Hewitt Society	Summer school aiming to use the arts, culture and discussion to promote understanding and respect between participants from various backgrounds.	5,000.00
111048	**Redrock Development Partnership (Tuesday Club)**	**Trip to Clontibrett to build cross-border/cross-community relations.**	**426.00**

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111094	Dialogue for Diversity	Community Chaplaincy Programme for newly released prisoners.	1,441.69
111111	**The Charles Wood Summer School**	**Summer School event aimed at promoting community relations through the medium of music.**	**3,000.00**
111256	Tommy Makem Festival of Traditional and Folk Song	Festival aiming to promote cross-community cultural diversity.	3,990.00
111287	**REACT**	**Single identity project to increase knowledge of Irish History including upcoming centenary events with workshops and study trips to Dublin and Stormont.**	**2,310.00**
		Total for Armagh	**16,167.69**
Ballymena Borough Council			
110991	Gig'n The Bann Festival Committee	Community festival aiming to promote Irish and Ulster Scots traditions through music and dance.	3,000.00
110995	**Glenravel Young at Heart**	**Healing and reconciliation project looking at the impact of the conflict in Glenravel.**	**1,200.00**
111045	Dunclug Partnership Group	Event aimed at promoting community relations during summer period.	2,000.00
111055	**Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum**	**Grant awarded for community partners in Ballymena to work together to create an art piece to be displayed in Braid Arts Centre as part of CR Week.**	**700.00**
111264	Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum	Event aiming to bring together communities to celebrate and engage with a range of minority ethnic communities in the Ballymena area.	1,150.00
111272	**Ballymena Borough Church Forum**	**Six week course addressing community relations issues .**	**1,556.00**
111418	Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum	Project to enable community partners to work together to create an art piece through diversity training workshops to reduce tensions in Ballykeel.	2,000.00
		Total for Ballymena	**11,606.00**
Banbridge District Council			
111262	**Rathfriland and District Regeneration Co Ltd**	**Cultural day exploring diversity and good relations issues.**	**2,480.00**
		Total for Banbridge	**2,480.00**

Belfast City Council			
100525	Belfast Islamic Centre	Project aiming to develop capacity and leadership for women from the Muslim community.	497.39
100662	**Indian Community Centre**	**Festival aiming to promote cultural awareness and understanding between differing communities.**	**2,100.00**
110980	Tar Isteach	Community event aimed at diversionary activities during a particular period of interface tension.	4,000.00
110982	**Ligoniel Family Centre**	**Development and delivery of cross-community education and training programmes.**	**2,845.00**
110997	Greater Shankill Partnership	A series of events to mark the 70th anniversary of Belfast Blitz and its impact on the whole community.	2,267.00
110999	**Open Hands**	**Good relations arts project.**	**3,975.00**
111000	Festival of Fools Ltd	International street theatre festival aiming to encourage greater use of shared public space.	5,000.00
111006	**Conflict in Cities and the Contested State**	**Grant awarded for conference examining international perspectives on urban conflicts.**	**4,990.00**
111007	Groundwork NI	Development of a mapping toolkit for use in good relations work.	4,180.00
111011	**Community Relations in Schools**	**Residential for parents - 'Building a Shared Future'.**	**4,390.00**
111012	Women In Faith	CR Week event seeking to explore faith and cultural traditions.	630.00
111014	**Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival**	**Arts festival showcasing multi-cultural events and promoting Belfast City Centre as a shared space.**	**4,500.00**
111015	Belfast Metropolitan College	CR training residential.	2,750.00
111025	**Irish Congress of Trade Unions**	**Project exploring issues around racism and the promotion of racial equality (DVD and educational pack).**	**2,500.00**
111032	Belfast Metropolitan College	CR Week community relations event.	350.00
111034	**Queen's Film Theatre**	**Film Festival addressing youth and cultural diversity issues.**	**3,000.00**
111041	Tides Training	Residential aiming to promote dialogue and understanding of cultural traditions.	5,000.00
111044	**APAC (Associated Photography for Art and Culture)**	**Grant awarded for promotion of cultural diversity through the use of La Tene and Dimension project.**	**3,040.00**
111050	Youth Works	A series of CR events working towards "Bringing down the walls".	5,000.00

111052	**Corpus Christi Youth Centre**	**'Understanding Prejudice and Discrimination' - Training the trainers - course for staff and volunteers.**	**1,925.00**
111053	Disabled Police Officers Association NI	Residential to Wexford and daytrip in NI to explore Irish history and culture.	5,000.00
111056	**Cinemagic Ltd**	**Media training with a group of young adults from interface areas followed by the creation of a short film.**	**2,480.00**
111058	Irish Football Association	Grant awarded for Football For All Match Delegates to monitor sectarianism and racism in the NI Boys FA League.	1,500.00
111085	**Markets Development Association**	**Summer diversionary programme aiming to reduce community tensions.**	**4,500.00**
111086	Summer Madness	Inter-church youth event aimed at promoting community relations through engagement with local communities across Belfast.	3,000.00
111087	**Women's Information Northern Ireland**	**Residential exploring the conflict in NI with particular reference to the urban/rural experience.**	**5,000.00**
111090	North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group	Provision of youth peer mentoring programme to youth from Tigers Bay/Newlodge communities.	4,000.00
111091	**Success Dragon and Lion Dance Association**	**Cultural festival aiming to promote cultural diversity and better community understanding.**	**3,600.00**
111092	Holy Family Youth Centre	Cultural Celebrations Programme aiming to promote cultural awareness.	1,806.00
111096	**Ransom Productions**	**Forum theatre with associated outreach sessions exploring community relations issues in Northern Ireland post-conflict.**	**4,125.00**
111097	LINC Resource Centre	CR residential programme for range of women's groups.	2,737.50
111100	**APAC (Associated Photography for Art and Culture)**	**A Citizens Wallpaper to gather and disseminate information and appreciate the different cultures living in Belfast.**	**2,704.00**
111101	Corpus Christi Youth Centre	Summer programme aiming to develop community relations opportunities for young adults.	4,872.67
111102	**An NASC Teo**	**Grant awarded for launch of art piece promoting Irish as a language for all.**	**2,500.00**
111105	Ardoyne Women's Group	Summer programme for young people in interface areas.	3,307.41
111112	**1st North Belfast Historical and Cultural Society**	**Project promoting greater understanding of the world wars and learning about the sacrifice of both traditions.**	**1,350.00**

111113	Upper Ardoyne Youth Club	Single-identity CR residential programme.	1,170.00
111125	**Place of Victory for All Nations**	**Exhibitions and performances of the various cultures represented in Belfast.**	**2,828.49**
111126	An Droichead	Music and Cultural Festival aiming to explore common heritage between communities in South Belfast.	4,500.00
111129	**Anti-Racism World Cup**	**Inter-Cultural football tournament with CR workshops.**	**1,500.00**
111130	ArtsEkta	Belfast Mela 2011- a multi-cultural community celebration event.	5,000.00
111135	**Women's Information Northern Ireland**	**Four information days to raise cultural awareness among a broad range of women's groups from different communities.**	**3,560.00**
111136	The Talent Tribe Circle	Arts based programme seeking to explore community relations themes with young people living in interface areas.	4,830.00
111137	**Culture Night Belfast**	**A series of cultural and arts events in Belfast involving a range of different communities.**	**4,500.00**
111154	Crosswires	Residential exploring cultural identity.	1,160.00
111155	**South Belfast Roundtable**	**Project looking to provide a new shared cultural space for incoming communities.**	**3,900.00**
111156	South Belfast Roundtable	Grant awarded for Belfast Friendship Club Evaluation and Write Up.	3,500.00
111157	**NI-TECA**	**Interfaith and Intercultural Panel Discussion Series.**	**1,800.00**
111161	Dance United Northern Ireland	Project aiming to address community relations issues through the medium of dance.	4,800.00
111168	**Northern Ireland Council for Refugees and Asylum Seekers**	**Residential programme aimed at promoting relationships between a range of cultural diversity groups.**	**4,465.00**
111169	Stadium Projects	A series of events exploring diverse cultures.	4,070.00
111215	**Holy Family Youth Centre**	**Cultural celebrations training programme.**	**3,400.00**
111217	Women's Tec	Young Women Building for Peace Training Programme.	3,890.00
111219	**Forthspring Inter Community Group**	**Grant awarded for the evaluation of Forthspring Good Relations Project.**	**2,940.00**
111223	The Fellowship of Messines Association	Two residentials/seminars exploring the theme of "Centenary Events Remembered - Can We Let The Past Imprison Our Future?".	4,999.50
111224	**Indian Community Centre**	**Grant awarded for festival aiming to promote cultural awareness and understanding between differing communities.**	**5,000.00**
111240	Arts and Disability Forum	Art project to share and encourage individuals to make a small commitment to peace.	1,460.99
111245	**Healing Through Remembering**	**Grant awarded for evaluation of Day of Reflection.**	**3,499.60**

111254	International Brigade Commemoration Committee	A series of events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the formation of International Brigades.	1,081.99
111263	**Open Hands**	**Multi-cultural Interface event to mark International Peace Day on 21st September 2011.**	**1,620.00**
111267	Falls Youth Providers	A residential to build relations between Falls/Shankill Interface Communities.	4,255.00
111268	**Rosario Youth Centre**	**Cross community educational programme for youth from divided communities.**	**5,000.00**
111270	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	Event looking to promote Shared Neighbourhood Week.	3,550.00
111279	**Polish Association NI**	**Event aiming to promote understanding and dialogue between different communities living in Northern Ireland.**	**1,020.00**
111288	Prime Cut Productions	Theatrical production exploring the demographics of East Belfast from 1912-2012.	5,000.00
111289	**Glentoran Partnership**	**Project aiming to raise the awareness of how sport can be used as a mechanism for promoting good relations.**	**5,000.00**
111293	Happy Children Charity	Intervention programme for young people from Short Strand/Newtownards Road interface areas.	5,000.00
111294	**Brantwood Military Heritage**	**A series of inter and intra community workshops exploring different aspects of local history.**	**2,800.00**
111296	Gilnahirk/St Colmcille's Inter-Church Group	A series of 6 meetings exploring the commemoration of events of 1912 to 1992 for participation from Gilnahirk Presbyterian Church and St Colmcille's parish.	450.00
111297	**Coiste na n-Iarchimi**	**Training for trainers programme to build capacity for former republican political prisoners to tackle CR issues.**	**336.00**
111302	Healing Through Remembering	Expand participation in the Day of Reflection and raise further awareness in community and media spheres.	2,000.00
111303	**Ugandan Community in N.I.**	**Residential and seminars exploring diversity.**	**2,120.60**
111322	Women's Information Northern Ireland	A joint project between women's groups from Belfast, South Armagh and ethnic communities sharing personal stories of the conflict in NI.	744.62
111326	**Green Shoot Productions**	**Three new works by local playwrights exploring post-conflict Northern Ireland with accompanying outreach programme.**	**3,500.00**
111329	Short Strand Community Forum	Diversionary programme aimed at reducing interface tension.	3,226.05

111330	**Falls Women Centre**	**Residential programme exploring political awareness and community issues/identity with Falls/Shankill Women's Groups.**	**200.00**
111334	Women In Faith	Series of meetings and activities/conferences aimed at women regarding shared heritage and understanding of migrant communities in NI.	1,000.00
111335	**British Deaf Association**	**To build resources and knowledge for increasing awareness of gender relations, diversity and community integration.**	**1,464.22**
111340	Cooke Centenary Church	Residential for a mixed group from the Ballynafeigh area to help Cooke Church understand and respond to local community needs.	750.00
111353	**Contemporary Christianity NI Ltd**	**Promotion of greater understanding of the steps taken by people in 1912, including the signing of the Ulster Covenant, through the use of a stage play.**	**3,000.00**
111384	ArtsEkta	Festival of events celebrating Indian and Irish Cultures.	3,000.00
111386	**1st North Belfast Historical and Cultural Society**	**Grant awarded to increase understanding of Irish History through a series of discussions between Republican and Loyalist participants.**	**600.00**
111389	Unionist Centenary	Grant awarded for promotion of greater understanding of the steps taken by people in 1912 including the signing of the Ulster Covenant and to explore the fight against Home Rule in Ireland.	3,000.00
111390	**LiDS**	**A project working with young people (18+) from all parts of Belfast over an 8-month period looking at cultural diversity within Belfast.**	**1,000.00**
111395	Willowfield Parish Community	Award granted for the promotion of greater understanding and to explore the building of community relations and leadership with a group of 20 young adults	900.00
111399	**Love Music Hate Racism**	**One day music and cultural event featuring local musicians and musicians from a minority ethnic background.**	**225.00**
111400	Love Music Hate Racism	A one day community conference and music workshop for people from all community backgrounds to come together to look at issues regarding racist incidents and racist attacks.	1,600.00
111401	**Love Music Hate Racism**	**One day music and cultural event featuring local musicians and musicians from a minority ethnic background.**	**600.00**
111410	Black Mountain Shared Space	Grant awarded to promote greater understanding and build the capacity of this newly established group in terms of good governance, community relations and legal guidance.	5,000.00
111411	**Public**	**Photography project with young Roma People**	**1,000.00**

Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Grant Awards 2012 – 2013

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Areas			
111158	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Cultural Diversity training and outreach programme on education pack - 'I came here for .....'	1,028.15
121514	**Healing Through Remembering**	**Project seeking to promote a day of reflection recalling those lost as a result of the NI Troubles.**	**2,105.15**
121923	Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd	Project aiming to develop dialogue between Loyalists, Republicans and other groups through a political Think Tank initiative.	5,000.00
		Total for All Areas	**8,133.30**
Antrim			
121861	**Cairncastle LOL 692 Community and Cultural Group**	**Residential exploring Cultural Diversity.**	**960.00**
		Total for Antrim	**960.00**
Ards			
121524	Link Family and Community Centre	Project aiming to build capacity for staff to engage with a diverse society and promote Good Relations practice.	1,599.16
121564	**Donaghadee Commerce and Development Group**	**To hold a community festival promoting cultural diversity.**	**700.00**
121684	Ards Camera Club	Project aiming to promote understanding of cultural diversity through photography.	405.50
121757	**North Down Community Assistance**	**Project aimed at reducing the number of flags erected in the Newtownards area.**	**5,000.00**
		Total for Ards	**7,704.66**
Armagh			
121531	CAIRDE (Communities in Armagh Investing in Regeneration Diversity and Enterprise)	Project aiming to promote cross-community and inter-cultural dialogue between migrant cultures and long standing residents.	4,057.57

121581	**The John Hewitt Society**	**Summer school aiming to use the arts, culture and discussion to promote understanding and respect between participants from various backgrounds.**	**5,000.00**
121694	The Charles Wood Festival of Music and Summer School	Summer School event aimed at promoting community relations through the medium of music.	2,250.00
121766	**Tommy Makem Festival of Song committee**	**Festival aiming to promote cultural diversity.**	**2,913.00**
121837	REACT	Public debate on marking anniversaries and their impact on community relations.	841.70
		Total for Armagh	**15,062.27**
Ballymena			
121521	**Ballymena Probus Club**	**Field trip to explore cultural heritage and history of Irish Republic.**	**2,074.00**
121570	Ballymena Borough Church Forum	Inter-church event to mark CR Week.	281.50
121621	**Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum**	**CR week event highlighting good relations programmes taking place in the Ballykeel Area.**	**950.00**
121818	Dunclug Youth Forum	A cultural programme tackling issues of difference between participants from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds.	1,060.00
121869	**Ballymena Borough Church Forum**	**An Inter Church event as part of the annual Advent lunchtime series to mark the week of Christian Unity.**	**890.03**
		Total for Ballymena	**5,255.53**
Ballymoney			
121518	Dervock and District Community Group	Multi-cultural Community Festival Celebration to explore and celebrate cultural traditions and the heritage of the village of Dervock	1,000.00
121842	**Bendooragh Apprentice Boys Cultural Society**	**Promote greater understanding of the role of both communities from NI during the World War and how they came together for a common cause.**	**1,000.00**
		Total for Ballymoney	**2,000.00**
Banbridge			
121872	Voice of the Bann	An evening event that celebrates St Patrick's Day through music dance and storytelling.	465.98
		Total for Banbridge	**465.98**

	Achievement	**exploring identity in partnership with Belfast Exposed.**	
111413	Feile An Phobail	Panel discussion and audience Q and A on the signing of the Ulster Covenant and resistance to Home Rule as part of the ongoing Feile.	1,500.00
111414	**The Ullans Academy**	**Grant awarded to support a St Patrick's Celebratory Breakfast to support a greater understanding of Ulster Scots/Ulster Gaelic heritage and culture.**	**375.00**
111415	Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Cross community Laganside women's event to coincide with the ICTU Women's Conference at the Waterfront Hall.	750.00
111417	**Round Tower Community Project**	**Grant awarded for promotion of greater understanding of the steps taken by people in 1912 including the signing of the Ulster Covenant and to explore the fight against Home Rule in Ireland.**	**1,000.00**
111434	Happy Children Charity	Intervention programme for young people from the Short Strand/Newtownards Road area.	5,000.00
111436	**Adullam Christian Ministries**	**Event aimed at promoting dialogue and understanding between women from different community and ethnic backgrounds.**	**2,850.00**
111493	The de Borda Institute	Workshops seeking to explore the role of inclusive voting procedures that create better political and social consensus.	1,040.00
111506	**174 Trust**	**Community Relations development programme for senior staff and board members.**	**875.00**
		Total for Belfast	275,629.03
Carrickfergus Borough Council			
111230	Carrickfergus YMCA	Good Relations Training Programme.	3,628.50
111419	**Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum**	**The celebration of diversity in Ballymena showcasing talent and culture among the minority ethnic community.**	**915.00**
		Total for Carrickfergus	**4,543.50**
Castlereagh Borough Council			
111273	Beyond Skin	Peace Day Festival.	1,000.00
		Total for Castlereagh	**1,000.00**
Cookstown Borough Council			
111027	**Loup Women's Group**	**Cross-community event aiming to promote good relations with a range of women from different communities.**	**550.00**

111259	Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network	Conference bringing together women from diverse communities to explore each other's cultures.	1,835.00
		Total for Cookstown	**2,385.00**
Craigavon Borough Council			
110979	**St Vincent de Paul**	**Grant awarded for CR residential to Corrymeela.**	**3,000.00**
110981	Railway Preservation Society of Ireland	Research into the CR impact of Portadown railway.	2,500.00
110990	**Ballybay Community Association**	**CR programme aiming to visit areas of historic significance to both communities.**	**1,000.00**
111098	Craigavon Intercultural Programme	Cultural Diversity programme aiming to raise awareness of different ethnic communities in Craigavon area.	3,100.00
111122	**South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association**	**Community Relations Youth Leadership Programme.**	**5,000.00**
		Total for Craigavon	**14,600.00**
Derry City Council			
110983	Inside Out	An international training programme for youth workers aiming to promote learning and dialogue between practitioners and between young people from different communities.	1,350.00
110998	**Peace and Reconciliation Group**	**CR Week event aiming to promote engagement between the community sector and young adults.**	**1,125.00**
111026	INCORE	CR based Summer School.	5,134.50
111033	**Peace and Reconciliation Group**	**Grant awarded for Let's Talk Politics event with CR focus for young people.**	**2,550.00**
111038	Inter-Faith Northwest	Project focusing on inter-faith education.	759.62
111093	**Cathedral Youth Club**	**CR week event aimed at addressing victims', women's and young people's issues.**	**2,000.00**
111099	Greater Shantallow Community Arts	A celebration of cultural diversity through art.	4,500.00
111128	**The Junction**	**Publication of 6 booklets as a means of generating debate around commemorations.**	**4,000.00**
111132	Foyle Pride Festival	Foyle Pride Festival promoting ethnic diversity.	1,000.00
111166	**Gasyard Wall Feile**	**Community festival aimed at promoting cultural diversity and community engagement.**	**3,760.00**

111167	Waterside Area Partnership	Community Festival aiming to improve relations within the Waterside area of Londonderry.	3,665.00
111231	**Churches In Co-Operation**	**A series of workshops/seminars/discussions exploring community relations issues.**	**1,751.61**
111258	Reach Across	Community relations training programme for young adults.	4,896.00
111266	**Teach Na Failte**	**Single-identity youth work residential for ex-combatants and young people.**	**1,235.00**
111341	First Derry Presbyterian Church	Award granted to encourage the interaction of groups on each side of the City's walls.	2,468.00
111387	**Greater Shantallow Community Arts**	**Grant awarded for a celebration of Derry/L'Derry's rich culture diversity through art.**	**3,000.00**
111499	Bloody Sunday Weekend Committee	Grant awarded to provide a platform for discussion and creative engagement as part of the process of transition towards improving local community relations and reconciliation.	1,100.00
		Total for Derry	**44,294.73**
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council			
111031	**Niamh Louise Foundation**	**Community activity days to promote and build cross-community relationships.**	**400.00**
111118	Cunningham's Lane Residents Association	A series of activities building relationships between the wider community.	1,000.00
111255	**Stronger Together**	**Grant awarded to a conference for those working in the field of minority ethnic integration and good relations.**	**4,231.43**
		Total for Dungannon	**5,631.43**
Fermanagh District Council			
111059	Erne Music Club	Fleadh involving traditional music and dance from a range of differing communities.	500.00
111109	**Fermanagh Churches Forum**	**A series of workshops and conferences to address community relations issues.**	**2,185.00**
		Total for Fermanagh	**2,685.00**
Larne Borough Council			
111089	Dalriada Festival Committee	Festival aiming to bring together members of differing communities living in the Glenarm area.	5,000.00
		Total for Larne	**5,000.00**
Limavady Borough Council			
111037	**North West Tongues Tones and Tapping**	**A series of cultural diversity events.**	**2,000.00**

111295	Glenshane Community Development	Shared history project co-hosted by the LOL and AOH specifically targeted at migrant community.	2,500.00
		Total for Limavady	**4,500.00**
Lisburn City Council			
111103	**Umbrella Multicultural Group**	**Mid-Summer Cultural Awareness Day.**	**1,460.55**
111162	Restoration Ministries	Event seeking to highlight the work of a range of peace building groups in Northern Ireland.	550.00
111398	**Stoneyford Jubilee Committee**	**Grant awarded to support 2 activities- a fact finding trip to Foxford, Co Mayo, and a St Patrick's Day event in the local Parish Hall to encourage widespread attendance in a shared space.**	**1,000.00**
111440	Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership	Project aiming to promote good relations and dialogue with ex-combatants.	1,805.00
111441	**Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership**	**Project aiming to improve relations with and community involvement of minority ethnic communities living in Greater Dunmurry area.**	**905.00**
111442	Greater Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership	Project aiming to run a series of community relations events involving a range of young adults and senior citizens.	1,245.00
		Total for Lisburn	**6,965.55**
Magherafelt District Council			
111030	**Church Street Community Association**	**Community event to promote community relations.**	**300.00**
111117	Maghera Arts Society	A series of historical and cultural lectures.	150.00
111280	**Upperlands Royal British Legion**	**Exhibition seeking to explore and highlight the roles played by members of both the main traditions of NI in the First and Second World Wars.**	**1,346.40**
111290	Lower Castledawson Community Association	Second stage of a community leadership training programme aiming to promote good relations.	3,000.00
		Total for Magherafelt	**4,796.40**

Multiple Councils			
110976	**Diversity Challenges**	**Project aiming to develop joint story telling project between border communities.**	**4,000.00**
110985	Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd	Project aiming to develop dialogue between differing communities through a political Think Tank initiative.	5,000.00
110992	**Healing Through Remembering**	**Grant to support the Day of Private Reflection and raise further awareness in community and media spheres.**	**2,000.00**
110993	Healing Through Remembering	Project seeking to promote a day of private reflection recalling those lost as a result of the NI Troubles.	3,000.00
111009	**Youth Initiatives**	**Grant awarded for Summer Camp exploring cultures, beliefs and traditions.**	**4,420.00**
111010	Northern Ireland Housing Executive	Good Relations Awards programme.	5,000.00
111040	**Rural Community Network**	**Conference exploring CR impact on the proposed closure and possible amalgamations of rural schools.**	**746.00**
111047	The Faith and Politics Group	Grant awarded for collation of CR resource documents.	660.00
111054	**Afro Community Support Organisation of NI (ACSONI)**	**Grant awarded for Africa Week 2011 and Intercultural Diversity Programme.**	**3,400.00**
111057	Partisan Productions	Forum Theatre Production addressing interdependence in rural areas and the development of shared rural spaces.	2,270.00
111107	**SNIPP**	**Promotion of dialogue and good relations through international dialogue programme.**	**4,950.00**
111261	Tinderbox Theatre Company	Outreach Programme to accompany a new play exploring issues within contemporary Northern Ireland Society.	2,500.00
111276	**Charter for Northern Ireland**	**Anti-racism project aiming to promote awareness and understanding of the differing communities living in Ireland.**	**4,200.00**
111286	Tyrone Donegal Programme	Learning exchange programme between community leaders in Northern Ireland and Boston.	4,728.00
111328	**The Spirit of Enniskillen Trust**	**Programme aiming to promote CR leadership training programme for young adults.**	**4,500.00**
111331	Irish School of Ecumenics	Grant awarded for conference exploring 'Hope and History: Remembering 1912-1922' and production of Newsletter to include accounts of and reflections on activities of Church Fora and Inter-Church groups.	600.00
		Total for Multiple	**51,974.00**

Newry and Mourne District Council			
111049	**Warrenpoint Comhaltas**	**Cultural diversity concert.**	**1,947.12**
111265	Newry and Mourne CAB	Good Relations Outreach programme.	1,618.80
		Total for Newry and Mourne	**3,565.92**
Newtownabbey Borough Council			
110994	**Glengormley School of Traditional Irish Music**	**Grant awarded for multi-cultural evening.**	**442.21**
111120	Rathcoole Churches Community Group	Summer intervention programme aimed at reducing interface tensions during the summer period.	2,233.72
111337	**Naomh Eanna CLG**	**Award granted for the development and community participation in Gaelic sports, language and cultural activities in the Newtownabbey area, leading to a shared space project.**	**2,500.00**
		Total for Newtownabbey	**5,175.93**
Omagh District Council			
111165	Omagh Ethnic Communities Support Group	Training programme 'Mediation, Cultural and CR Skills Programme'.	3,418.00
		Total for Omagh	**3,418.00**
		Overall Total	**488,102.13**

Research Awards 2011-2012

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Councils			
111504	Dr Maire Braniff	Review on international peace agreements and lessons that have been learned from other post-conflict societies on how these agreements have been implemented.	4,384.00
111505	**Karen McMinn & Joanna McMinn**	**Review on the impact of gender on community leadership and community relations work In Northern Ireland.**	**4,500.00**
111507	Institute for Conflict Research	An examination of the connections between Human Rights, Equality and Community Relations.	6,250.00
		Total for All Councils	**15,134.00**
Multiple Councils			
100681	**Deloitte MCS Limited**	**Research looking at CRC funding/resources in comparison to areas with identified need.**	**11,130.00**
		Total for Multiple Councils	**11,130.00**
		Overall Total	**26,264.00**

Core Funding Grant Scheme 2011-2012

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
Armagh City & District Council			
110973	REACT	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	37,473.18
		Total for Armagh	**37,473.18**
Belfast City Council			
110946	**Ballynafeigh Community Development Association**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**37,585.72**
110947	174 Trust	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	44,000.00
110953	**North Belfast Interface Network**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**78,403.86**
110965	Interaction Belfast	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	59,195.33
110966	**Intercomm**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**24,212.98**
110967	Belfast Interface Project	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	64,155.02
110968	**LINC Resource Centre**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**89,033.00**
		Total for Belfast	**396,585.91**
Coleraine Borough Council			
110969	Kilcranny House	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	36,881.54
		Total for Coleraine	**36,881.54**
Cookstown Borough Council			
110972	**Rural Community Network**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**41,749.97**
		Total for Cookstown	**41,749.97**
Craigavon Borough Council			
110975	PAKT LURGAN	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	30,646.00
		Total for Craigavon	**30,646.00**
Derry City Council			
110940	**The Junction/Holywell Trust**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**86,345.50**
110942	Peace & Reconciliation Group	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	87,729.00

110950	**The Nerve Centre**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**18,825.00**
		Total for Derry	**192,899.50**
Multiple Councils			
090934	Irish School of Ecumenics	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	299.66
110941	**Institute for Conflict Research**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**31,701.00**
110943	Trademark	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	59,976.00
110944	**Tides Training**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**42,400.00**
110945	Corrymeela Community	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	135,119.00
110948	**Partisan Productions**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,652.50**
110949	Ulster Peoples College	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	19,020.00
110951	**Groundwork NI**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,137.31**
110954	Mediation Northern Ireland	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	73,054.27
110964	**Irish School of Ecumenics**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**36,343.81**
110971	Workers Educational Association	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	58,160.70
110974	**Public Achievement**	**Core funding costs to support community relations activity.**	**26,768.01**
		Total for Multiple	**535,632.26**
Newtownabbey Borough Council			
110970	Community Relations Forum	Core funding costs to support community relations activity.	33,502.76
		Total for Newtownabbey	**33,502.76**
		Overall Total	**1,305,371.12**

Media Grant Scheme 2011-2012

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Councils			
111402	Belfast Film Festival	*Life as an interface* is a 15 minute film looking at those who live on an interface area in Belfast (Skegoneill/Glandore). It shows that they, like everyone else, have families, work and mortgages, and they carry out those lives within the context of also trying to ensure that their neighbourhood is safe and can be shared.	16,000.00
		Total for All Councils	**16,000.00**
Belfast City Council			
111403	**Raidio Failte 107.1FM**	**Raidio Failte Teo produced a 7-part series of Irish language/bilingual radio programmes setting the scene for the commemoration of a number of significant anniversaries in the period 2012 – 2023, using the themes of industrial heritage, labour movements and the role of the Irish language itself in society, in the northern part of Ireland in the period. The digital media project through the medium of the Irish language explored the economic and social conditions that prevailed in the early part of the 20th century and at resultant political events.**	**14,000.00**
		Total for Belfast	**14,000.00**
Multiple Councils			
100580	The Nerve Centre	Using GPS devices the project mapped the daily routes of 60 young people from 6 post-primary schools to illustrate how division and sharing affect their everyday lives. This was linked to the geography, citizenship and IT curriculum. Results will be disseminated on a website to facilitate greater understanding and discussion.	2,859.71
111404	**ZMN Creative Studio**	***Tapestry of Colours* is an 80 minute film by filmmaker Zhenia Mahdi which explores the heritage of various cultures that make up life throughout Northern Ireland and will especially look for emerging identities. The film uses personal stories and experiences which highlight attempts to integrate - successfully or not.**	**22,850.00**
		Total for Multiple	**25,709.71**
		Overall Total	**55,709.71**

Publications Grant Scheme 2011-2012

Ref	Publisher	Summary	Amount Paid
All Councils			
100663	Community Arts Forum	Publication of *A Coming of Age* - The shared legacy of Community Arts Forum and New Belfast Community Arts Initiative	£ 1,500.00
111149	**Shanway Press**	**Publication of *Madge Davison - A Revolutionary Firebrand - Recollections***	**£ 2,200.00**
111292	Media Associates	Production of *VIEW* online monthly interactive publication (3 issues)	£ 3,900.00
111321	**St. Columbs Park House**	**Publication of *Bridging the Gap* report of the Derry-Londonderry Forum for Cities in Transition Conference**	**£ 3,390.00**
111343	Contemporary Christianity NI Ltd	Publication of *1912 - The Fateful Year*	£ 4,800.00
111490	**Belfast Interface Project**	**Publication of *Belfast Interfaces: Security Barriers and Defensive Use of Space***	**£ 1,140.00**
		Overall Total	**£ 16,930.00**

Pathfinder Grant Scheme 2011-2012

Ref	Group	Summary	Amount Paid (£)
All Councils			
111232	Farset Youth & Community Development Ltd	Project aiming to develop dialogue between differing communities through a political Think Tank initiative.	5,000.00
		Total for All Councils	**5,000.00**
Armagh City & District Council			
111008	**REACT**	**Project aiming to reduce community tensions and promote positive cultural expression.**	**3,349.96**
		Total for Armagh	3,349.96
Belfast City Council			
090944	Crusaders Football Athletic & Sports Club	Crusaders/Newington shared space project to build a joint football proposal.	14,270.21
100220	**Corpus Christi Youth Centre**	**To offer a range of programmes to the local youth on community relations and cultural traditions issues.**	**630.00**
100221	Corpus Christi Youth Centre	A series of cultural festivals exploring the various cultures now resident in NI.	400.00
100380	**North Belfast Community Development and Transition Group**	**One year project to lay the groundwork and prepare for the formation of a holistic cross-interface partnership between New Lodge and Tigers Bay communities of North Belfast.**	**5,182.97**
100665	Black Mountain Shared Space	A cross community initiative to address anti - community behaviour issues and eliminate interface tension.	6,048.00
100669	**Groundwork NI**	**Delivery of the Sharing Our Space project.**	**4,145.81**
110996	Diversity Challenges	Grant awarded for a training programme to develop the understanding of the principles of restorative justice.	5,000.00
111042	**Twaddell/Woodvale Residents Association**	**Support towards development of community facility at a community interface.**	**2,704.00**
111046	Ballymurphy Research Group	Series of events looking at a range of perspectives surrounding the deaths of residents from the Ballymurphy area as a result of the conflict.	834.27
111088	**GLU Project**	**Community diversionary event to promote positive community relations.**	**500.00**
111106	Interaction Belfast	Mobile phone network covering interface areas in the West Belfast area.	2,475.41
111110	**Greater Whitewell Community Surgery**	**Strategic development residential aiming to develop community relations work of the group.**	**3,080.00**

111123	Belfast South Community Resources	Grant awarded for Sandy Row Re-imaging project.	5,000.00
111124	**East Belfast Ex-Prisoners & Combatants Association**	**Conflict resolution programme aiming to explore the causes and resolution of conflict.**	**2,318.76**
111134	Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre	Summer Intervention Programme.	2,000.00
111138	**Conflict Resolution Services (Ireland)**	**Grant awarded for Interface Dialogue Programme.**	**4,546.00**
111146	Woodvale and Cambria Youth & Community Association	Project aimed at addressing interface conflict and promoting a positive alternative to contentious cultural expression.	7,905.70
111148	**Scoil an Droichid**	**Summer scheme aimed at providing diversionary activities for young people living in interface areas.**	**5,000.00**
111153	Belfast Orangefest	Support towards carnival based activities.	2,998.00
111218	**Happy Children Charity**	**Summer intervention programme for young people from Short Strand/Newtownards Road Interface areas.**	**8,000.00**
111221	Greater Whitewell Community Surgery	Summer diversionary programme aimed at reducing community tensions within interface areas.	1,160.00
111227	**Sandy Row Cultural Society**	**Programme of workshops seeking to explore key historical events that impacted on both the main traditions in Ireland.**	**1,005.00**
111253	Ard Eoin Fleadh Project	Community festival aiming to reduce community tensions and promote better community relations within an interface area.	10,000.00
111271	**North Belfast Interface Network**	**Grant awarded for support towards the maintenance of mobile network.**	**3,200.00**
111274	Conflict Resolution Services (Ireland)	Grant awarded for developing and delivering a mediation service to resolve disputes and provide alternatives to anti-social and violent response to conflict.	5,000.00
111291	**North Belfast Interface Network**	**Pathfinder Award to North Belfast Interface Network for core programmes.**	**43,028.40**
111298	Conflict Resolution Services (Ireland)	Grant awarded for the recruitment of participants and hard to reach groups who are outside the peace process to encourage debate/discussion and develop training in Human Rights and non-violence.	5,000.00
111320	**Short Strand Community Forum**	**Pathfinder Core Funding Support Grant.**	**28,173.00**
111407	Falls Community Council	Salary costs over a fixed period of time for a worker to further develop an inter-community project previously supported by IFI Community Bridges.	22,000.00

111409	**Intercomm**	**Project aiming to design a peace building framework to provide safe neighbourhoods and peaceful interfaces.**	**7,190.00**
111569	Lower Shankill Community Association	Support towards the on-going development of community programmes aimed at enhancing community relations and community capacity.	5,000.00
		Total for Belfast	**213,795.53**
Coleraine Borough Council			
111144	**Patchwork Ireland**	**Delivery of a bespoke programme of support and services within the Churchlands ward.**	**4,375.00**
111145	Patchwork Ireland	Development support to key community influencers in key housing estates in the Coleraine area.	1,250.00
111241	**Patchwork Ireland**	**Support to key families and individuals in the Churchlands ward who have been directly impacted by sectarian violence in the "Heights" and Killowen areas of Coleraine.**	**2,500.00**
111242	Patchwork Ireland	Mentoring programme aiming to develop community relations at a local level.	4,875.00
111243	**Patchwork Ireland**	**Programme aiming to develop community capacity to address community relations issues in the area.**	**2,750.00**
		Total for Coleraine	**15,750.00**
Craigavon Borough Council			
111147	Epworth Methodist Church Bonfire Group	Event aimed at reducing community tensions during key summer period.	1,183.44
		Total for Craigavon	**1,183.44**
Derry City Council			
111163	**Maiden City Festival**	**Project aiming to develop cross-community understanding and dialogue.**	**5,000.00**
111246	Bogside & Brandywell Initiative	Summer Intervention Programme - Soccer Blitz.	2,550.00
111247	**Clooney Estate Residents Association**	**Summer diversionary programme.**	**2,530.00**
111249	Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership	Summer diversionary programme.	4,986.00
		Total for Derry	**15,066.00**

Larne Borough Council			
111108	**Cairncastle LOL 692 Community and Cultural Group**	**Ulster Scots Folk Festival Promoting Multi-Culturalism and community cohesion through music.**	**3,500.00**
		Total for Larne	**3,500.00**
Magherafelt District Council			
111028	Maghera Sons Of William Flute Band	Diversionary community event aimed at reducing community tensions.	500.00
		Total for Magherafelt	**500.00**
Multiple Councils			
091125	**Anne Frank Trust UK**	**To support the touring Anne Frank and Me Exhibition to ensure community participation and to underpin Unite Against Hate.**	**6,650.80**
111248	Training for Women Network Ltd	Core support for community based political education and training programmes and provision of information services.	6,509.43
		Total for Multiple	**13,160.23**
Omagh District Council			
111283	**Edenderry Street Project**	**Grant awarded for various activities to places of cultural significance and workshops.**	**1,000.00**
		Total for Omagh	**1,000.00**
		Overall Total	**272,305.16**

Appendix 3: District Council Good Relations Programme Allocation 2011-2015[24]

	2011/12		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Antrim	£63,970.35	£29,466.75	£34,503.60
Ards	£90,923.54	£32,623.54	£58,300.00
Armagh	£129,175.50	£61,675.50	£67,500.00
Ballymena	£95,472.32	£66,484.82	£28,987.50
Ballymoney	£77,672.25	£28,547.25	£49,125.00
Banbridge	£122,731.92	£60,106.92	£62,625.00
Belfast	£525,867.25	£124,061.25	£401,806.00
Carrickfergus	£68,223.01	£42,311.23	£25,911.78
Castlereagh	£61,743.62	£37,668.62	£24,075.00
Coleraine	£92,651.25	£49,226.25	£43,425.00
Cookstown	£99,460.46	£40,654.50	£58,805.96
Craigavon	£131,406.75	£53,271.75	£78,135.00
Derry	£331,445.25	£106,342.63	£225,102.62
Down	£107,770.98	£39,346.62	£68,424.36
Dungannon + South Tyrone	£149,436.75	£63,186.75	£86,250.00
Fermanagh	£96,885.00	£39,536.25	£57,348.75
Larne	£63,631.50	£29,881.50	£33,750.00
Limavady	£87,165.53	£56,127.75	£31,037.78
Lisburn	£76,648.14	£48,427.50	£28,220.64
Magherafelt	£104,044.01	£34,889.04	£69,154.97
Moyle	£52,729.50	£30,229.50	£22,500.00
Newry + Mourne	£167,086.23	£99,211.23	£67,875.00
Newtownabbey	£103,758.00	£30,232.50	£73,525.50
North Down	£77,814.75	£45,798.00	£32,016.75
Omagh	£58,782.66	£31,042.66	£27,740.00
Strabane	£121,890.00	£53,515.00	£68,375.00
Total	**£3,158,386.52**	**£1,333,865.31**	**£1,824,521.21**

	2012/13		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Antrim	£65,252.25	£29,852.25	£35,400.00
Ards	£104,807.25	£32,094.51	£72,712.74
Armagh	£143,758.50	£69,508.50	£74,250.00

24 Information from OFMdFM 2 October 2014

	2012/13		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Ballymena	£95,943.00	£71,755.50	£24,187.50
Ballymoney	£78,962.97	£29,837.97	£49,125.00
Banbridge	£133,771.08	£69,196.08	£64,575.00
Belfast	£480,128.85	£126,125.10	£354,003.75
Carrickfergus	£92,559.00	£42,123.41	£50,435.59
Castlereagh	£66,648.65	£35,174.90	£31,473.75
Coleraine	£90,194.25	£54,357.75	£35,836.50
Cookstown	£93,604.50	£41,254.50	£52,350.00
Craigavon	£128,108.97	£45,281.61	£82,827.36
Derry	£324,140.06	£96,721.89	£227,418.17
Down	£122,831.67	£41,719.92	£81,111.75
Dungannon + South Tyrone	£156,619.46	£70,369.46	£86,250.00
Fermanagh	£113,618.42	£41,924.67	£71,693.75
Larne	£81,150.00	£32,400.00	£48,750.00
Limavady	£97,659.68	£73,509.68	£24,150.00
Lisburn	£101,115.09	£45,015.09	£56,100.00
Magherafelt	£105,903.75	£35,713.03	£70,190.72
Moyle	£55,507.10	£33,007.10	£22,500.00
Newry + Mourne	£177,795.75	£99,045.75	£78,750.00
Newtownabbey	£92,381.25	£31,001.25	£61,380.00
North Down	£90,345.00	£39,145.00	£51,200.00
Omagh	£70,216.83	£32,379.33	£37,837.50
Strabane	£116,272.44	£48,772.44	£67,500.00
Total	**£3,279,295.77**	**£1,367,286.69**	**£1,912,009.08**

	2013/14		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Antrim	£60,490.56	£29,869.56	£30,621.00
Ards	£124,016.50	£33,141.50	£90,875.00
Armagh	£167,943.00	£68,943.00	£99,000.00
Ballymena	£87,553.40	£72,210.47	£15,342.93
Ballymoney	£82,846.61	£31,353.48	£51,493.13
Banbridge	£138,503.03	£66,053.33	£72,449.70
Belfast	£485,128.85	£126,125.10	£359,003.75
Carrickfergus	£158,668.75	£45,726.34	£112,942.41

	2013/14		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Castlereagh	£80,330.19	£42,830.40	£37,499.79
Coleraine	£90,747.00	£51,118.50	£39,628.50
Cookstown	£104,474.25	£43,499.25	£60,975.00
Craigavon	£121,437.94	£50,922.57	£70,515.37
Derry	£360,683.83	£103,770.95	£256,912.88
Down	£118,350.05	£42,371.57	£75,978.48
Dungannon + South Tyrone	£170,230.64	£74,980.64	£95,250.00
Fermanagh	£112,253.01	£46,212.01	£66,041.00
Larne	£74,602.25	£32,433.50	£42,168.75
Limavady	£96,813.00	£59,275.50	£37,537.50
Lisburn	£96,789.69	£48,263.19	£48,526.50
Magherafelt	£97,519.69	£34,414.00	£63,105.69
Moyle	£56,691.18	£34,191.18	£22,500.00
Newry + Mourne	£166,170.75	£99,045.75	£67,125.00
Newtownabbey	£82,556.70	£29,463.00	£53,093.70
North Down	£89,600.78	£53,884.78	£35,716.00
Omagh	£65,187.91	£32,458.47	£32,729.44
Strabane	£115,687.50	£57,300.00	£58,387.50
Total	**£3,405,277.06**	**£1,409,858.04**	**£1,995,419.02**

	2014/15		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Antrim	£49,000.00	£30,870.00	£18,130.00
Ards	£97,000.00	£35,098.50	£61,901.50
Armagh	£137,000.00	£69,508.50	£67,491.50
Ballymena	£79,000.00	£73,598.33	£5,401.67
Ballymoney	£67,000.00	£37,698.75	£29,301.25
Banbridge	£111,000.00	£72,021.83	£38,978.17
Belfast	£402,000.00	£184,078.50	£217,921.50
Carrickfergus	£128,000.00	£63,987.00	£64,013.00
Castlereagh	£65,000.00	£39,823.50	£25,176.50
Coleraine	£74,000.00	£50,844.75	£23,155.25
Cookstown	£84,000.00	£43,800.00	£40,200.00
Craigavon	£99,000.00	£61,710.12	£37,289.88
Derry	£310,000.00	£109,290.97	£200,709.03

	2014/15		
Council	**Total 75%**	**Salaries 75%**	**Programme 75%**
Down	£97,000.00	£43,164.68	£53,835.32
Dungannon + South Tyrone	£140,000.00	£74,980.50	£65,019.50
Fermanagh	£94,000.00	£61,132.50	£32,867.50
Larne	£60,000.00	£32,443.50	£27,556.50
Limavady	£79,000.00	£58,792.50	£20,207.50
Lisburn	£78,000.00	£45,828.75	£32,171.25
Magherafelt	£79,000.00	£36,255.00	£42,745.00
Moyle	£47,000.00	£34,883.33	£12,116.67
Newry + Mourne	£137,000.00	£108,577.28	£28,422.72
Newtownabbey	£67,000.00	£27,930.00	£39,070.00
North Down	£72,000.00	£52,386.00	£19,614.00
Omagh	£55,000.00	£35,175.53	£19,824.47
Strabane	£93,000.00	£51,862.50	£41,137.50
Total	**£2,800,000.00**	**£1,535,742.82**	**£1,264,257.18**



Research and Information Service
Briefing Paper

Paper 000/00 28 November 2014 NIAR 716-14

Michael Potter and Anne Campbell

Community Relations Funding through Local Councils in Northern Ireland

1 Introduction

This paper briefly outlines community relations[1] funding for groups through local councils in Northern Ireland in the context of the inquiry by the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister into the Together: Building a United Community strategy[2]. The paper is a supplement to a previous paper, Community Relations Funding in Northern Ireland[3].

It is not intended to detail all community relations activities of local councils, but a summary is given of how funding originating in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minster (OFMdFM) is used for grants to local organisations.

1 It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss terminology in relation to this area. The term 'community relations' has tended to be replaced by 'good relations' in many areas, although both terms are still in use in various contexts. 'Community relations' is used here for simplicity and does not infer preference.

2 'Inquiry into Building a United Community', Committee for OFMdFM web pages, accessed 2 October 2014: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Committees/Office-of-the-First-Minister-and-deputy-First-Minister/Inquiries/Building-a-United-Community/.

3 Research and Information Service Briefing Paper 99/14 *Community Relations Funding in Northern Ireland*, 9 October 2014: http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Documents/RaISe/Publications/2014/ofmdfm/9914.pdf

2 Community Relations Funding in Local Councils

Funding from OFMdFM is distributed to each of the councils at a rate of 75%, with the remaining 25% matched by the council itself. A proportion of this money is spent on salaries for a community relations department or equivalent and the rest on programme costs. Programme costs can include activities by the council, training, events, service level agreements and partnership work with other organisations or the distribution of grants.

Each council uses the funding differently and in most cases grants to local groups and organisations is a very small part of the programme. For example, Magherafelt District Council has not distributed grants since 2012[4] and Dungannon District Council has used money to work in partnership with local organisations rather than in the distribution of grants[5]. In Belfast City Council, 470 separate organisations have received almost £1.7 million of funding from 2011-12 to 2013-14 through small grants, summer intervention and St Patrick's Day programmes[6]. In all, 1332 separate organisations have been in receipt of community relations funding through local councils in the past three years.

It is not intended here to itemise the various uses of the community relations funds by each of the local councils, but a full list of funding received by each organisation by council area in the financial years 2011-12 to 2013-14 is at Appendix 1.

Table 1 shows the full value of council community relations funding and the proportion that is used for the distribution of grants.

4 Information from Magherafelt District Council 8 October 2014.

5 Information from Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council 1 October 2014.

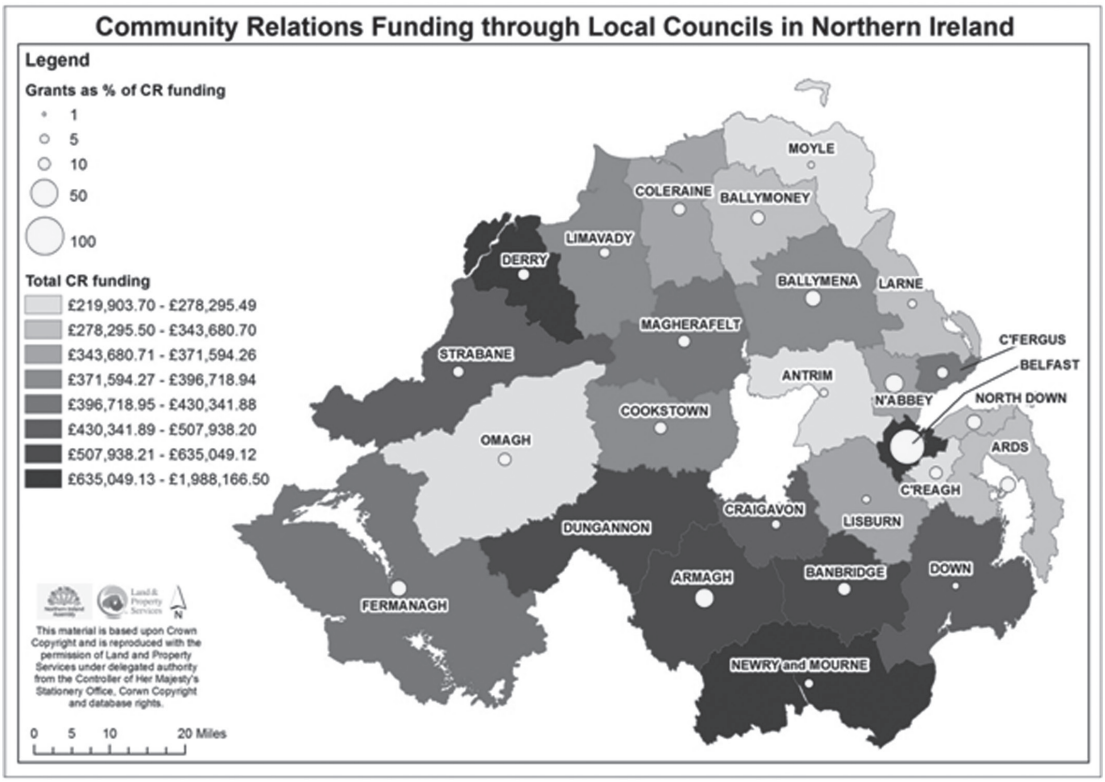
6 Information from Belfast City Council 24 September 2014.

Table 1: Use of Community Relations Funding Distributed to Councils in the Financial Years 2011-12 to 2013-14[7]

Council	Total CR Funding	Grants	Grants as Percentage of all CR Funding
Antrim	£252,951.21	£11,566.99	4.6%
Ards	£305690.88	£48,246.17	15.8%
Armagh	£587,836.00	£158,038.00	26.9%
Ballymena	£371,958.29	£67,764.14	18.2%
Ballymoney	£319309.10	£39,010.00	12.2%
Banbridge	£526,674.68	£61,562.00	11.7%
Belfast	£1,988,166.50	£1,688,915.00	84.9%
Carrickfergus	£425,934.44	£40,770.40	9.6%
Castlereagh	£278,295.49	£31,140.80	11.2%
Coleraine	£364,790.00	£39,191.95	10.7%
Cookstown	£396,718.94	£44,820.00	11.3%
Craigavon	£507,938.20	£29,799.00	5.9%
Derry	£1,355,025.40	£243,904.40	10.0%
Down	£465,270.24	£17,019.82	3.7%
Dungannon and South Tyrone	£635,049.12	Nil	0%
Fermanagh	£430,341.88	£79,058.69	18.4%
Larne	£292,511.66	£15,153.24	5.2%
Limavady	£387,264.00	£29,904.10	7.7%
Lisburn	£366,070.56	£17,605	4.8%
Magherafelt	£409,956.60	£43,312.13	10.7%
Moyle	£219,903.70	£6,608.00	3.0%
Newry and Mourne	£681,403.64	£40,700.00	6.0%
Newtownabbey	£371,594.26	£92,188.74	24.8%
North Down	£343,680.70	£52,645.51	15.3%
Omagh	£258,916.53	£27,596.00	10.7%
Strabane	£471,799.92	39,769.14	8.4%

7 This table is compiled from information provided by OFMdFM 2 October 2014 and from the local councils (see Appendix 1). Total costs are calculated from the 75% rate provided by OFMdFM and taken over the three financial years in question

The following map shows the distribution of community relations funding by local council, indicating the percentage used for the distribution of grants.



Belfast uses more than 80% of its community relations funds for the distribution of grants, but this is not the norm: the average is 13.5% of the total across all councils.

Appendix 1: Local Council Community Relations Grants to Groups: Financial Years 2011/12 to 2013/14

Antrim[8]

Springfarm and District Community Association	£6,003.00
Community Relations in Schools	£910.00
PeacePlayers Int NI	£1,630.00
Corrymeela	£507.56
Northern Ireland Youth Forum	£2,516.43
Total	**£11,566.99**

Ards[9]

North Down Community Assistance	£6,461.51
Link Family and Community Centre	£1,799.16
Donaghadee Commerce and Development Group	£2,075.00
Ards Camera Club	£405.50
Friends of Portaferry Presbyterian Church	£1,400.00

8 Information from Antrim Borough Council 22 September 2014.

9 Information from Ards Borough Council 23 September 2014.

Loughries Historical Society	£1,800.00
Portaferry Accordion Band	£600.00
Donaghadee Community Partnership	£1,200.00
Millisle and District Community Association	£900.00
St Patrick's Flower Festival Committee	£600.00
Ballygowan Youth Club	£1,800.00
Ballywalter Bowling Club	£2,025.00
Ballywalter Youth Club	£1,280.00
Comber and District Cage Bird Society	£300.00
North Down RUR Branch Royal Irish Rangers Association	£200.00
East Down Rural Community Network	£300.00
Bowtown Community Development Group	£600.00
West Winds Social and Cultural Institution	£400.00
Harmony Trust	£1,200.00
Ards Youth FC	£600.00
Bowtown Youth Club	£800.00
East Ards Historical Society	£100.00
Barnados	£1,800.00
Killinchy Seniors	£600.00
Cloughey DCA	£200.00
Trinity Presbyterian Church	£100.00
Carrowdore Early Years	£1,600.00
Blair Maine Research Society	£800.00
Ards over 50s Forum	£400.00
United Ulster History Forum	£1,600.00
Ballycran Camogie Club	£600.00
Wounded Police and Families Association	£1,000.00
Tagit Fishing Club	£1,200.00
Millisle Youth Forum	£1,800.00
Portaferry Community Collective	£200.00
Portaferry Gala Committee	£1,000.00
Comber Autism Group	£600.00
Comber Horticultural Society	£400.00
Ballyhalbert Park HRA	£400.00
Friends of 1st N'Ards PC	£600.00
East End RA	£100.00
Glastry College PTA	£200.00

St Mark's Parish Church	£600.00
Ballywalter CAG	£600.00
Portavogie DAG	£600.00
Castle Gardens PTA	£600.00
Peninsula Praise Group	£100.00
Portaferry in Bloom	£200.00
Portaferry/Strangford Trust	£600.00
Comber Rec	£800.00
Portaferry WI	£100.00
Ballygowan DCA	£100.00
AGENDA	£100.00
Embrace Comber	£200.00
Friends of Lord L'Derry OCL	£600.00
Ballyphilip YC	£400.00
Peninsula Amateur Theatre Co	£200.00
FASA	£400.00
Total	**£48,246.17**

Armagh[10]

Armagh Road Bowls	£3,000.00
CAIRDE	£17,050.00
North of Ireland Bands Association	£4,800.00
Co Armagh Milk Cup Association	£3,000.00
Drumnaleg Community Association	£250.00
Charles Wood Summer School	£7,000.00
Armagh Old Boys Silver Band	£6,000.00
Richhill Improvements Association	£2,000.00
All Set Cross Cultural Project	£1,160.00
Markethill District Enterprise Ltd	£750.00
High Rollers S.O.C.	£200.00
Nifty 50's Tandragee	£200.00
Little Villagers Playgroup	£250.00
Stagehands	£250.00
Lena Mackrel School's Poetry Competition	£1,740.00
Hamiltonsbawn Community Association	£250.00
Middletown & District Community Development Assoc	£2,000.00

10 Information from Armagh City and District Council 17 October 2014.

Keady & District Community Initiatives	£500.00
Northern Ireland Bridge Union	£3,900.00
Charlemont & Collegeland Development Association	£200.00
Ballymacnab Community Development Association	£750.00
Milford Preservation Trust	£1,800.00
Setanta Mixed Martial Arts Club	£1,200.00
Redrock Development Partnership / Tuesday Club	£250.00
Armagh City & District U3A	£1,700.00
Markethill Festival Committee	£3,250.00
The Upbeat Agency	£1,250.00
Loughgall Vintage & Classic Club	£960.00
St Mochuas Branch Comhaltas Ceoltairi Eireann	£1,500.00
Armagh Rose of Tralee Festival	£2,000.00
Saint Patrick's Trian A Centre for Creative Practi	£3,000.00
Church Hill Community Development Association	£250.00
Mid-Ulster Football Association	£500.00
Armagh GAA County Board	£3,500.00
Ballymore Bicentenary Committee	£1,250.00
1st Annaghmore Boys Brigade	£175.00
Killylea & District Development Committee	£500.00
Tassagh Cultural Rural Neighbourhood Group	£250.00
North Armagh Motor Club	£2,000.00
Association of Old Vehicle Clubs In NI LTD	£400.00
St Paul's Parish	£200.00
Tandragee Development Initiative	£250.00
Keady Community Band	£200.00
Richhill Buildings Preservation Trust	£2,500.00
Markethill Horse & Pony Driving Club Ltd	£1,000.00
Charles Wood Summer School	£18,000.00
Keady Community Cultural & Festival Group	£200.00
Armagh Boys & Girls Club	£1,750.00
Armagh Public Library & Armagh Observatory	£1,810.00
The City Chapter	£1,500.00
Armagh Pipers Club	£9,000.00
Fit 4 U Armagh Club	£200.00
Derrynoose Community Development Association	£250.00
Portadown Armagh Railway Society (PARS)	£200.00

Keady & District Community Initiative	£500.00
Castle Defenders Flute Band	£250.00
Derrynoose Drama Group	£2,350.00
Armagh Senior Citizens Forum	£850.00
Setanta Mixed Martial Arts	£1,200.00
Tynan & Armagh Point to Point	£2,300.00
Armagh City & District Council Tourism & Events	£7,500.00
Keady Community Cultural & Festival Group	£4,000.00
Club Spraoi	£200.00
Darkley Primary School	£900.00
Lisdown Community Fellowship	£550.00
Keady Older and Bolder Club	£250.00
The Crafty Group (Stitchers)	£200.00
Drumnaleg Community Association	£300.00
Hamiltonsbawn Cultural Society	£250.00
Milford Community Development Association	£750.00
Loughgall and District Improvement Association	£1,200.00
All Set Cross Cultural Project	£380.00
Tynan Development Committee Limited	£250.00
Armagh City Choir	£1,113.00
Armagh Cool Club	£200.00
Royal British Legion Tandragee Branch	£250.00
Moyrourkan Group	£400.00
MY Youth Group Middletown	£250.00
BANI	£200.00
AMBER	£200.00
Markethill District Lol No. 10	£10,000.00
Downs Extra	£200.00
Mullahead Ploughing Society	£3,000.00
Total	**£158,038.00**

Ballymena[11]

Gig'n the Bann festival	£3,000.00
Glenravel Young at Heart	£1,500.00
Dunclug Partnership Group	£3,295.00
Ballymena Inter-Ethnic Forum	£24,666.26
Ballymena Borough Church Forum	£3,822.13
Ballymena Probus Club	£2,074.00
Mediation Northern Ireland	£3,421.08
Ahoghill Senior Citizens' Bowling Club	£268.75
All Saints' Community Outings Group	£281.25
Ballymarlow & District Community Association	£445.74
Ballymena Festival of Music, Speech and Dance	£600.00
Ballymena Parades and Bands' Forum	£60.00
Ballymena Retirement Group	£900.00
Ballymena Senior Citizens' Club	£900.00
Braidwater Senior Citizens' Group	£900.00
Broughshane & District Community Association	£681.36
Carnlea	£300.00
Castlegore Flute Band	£300.00
Cloney Rural Development Association	£900.00
Cloney Young at Heart	£600.00
Clough & District Senior Citizens' Group	£600.00
Clough Community Association	£300.00
Clough Fife and Drum Club	£271.54
Community Focus Learning	£300.00
Cullybackey Development Agency	£190.00
Dunclug & District Resident Association	£324.07
Dunclug College	£300.00
Dunclug Senior Citizens' Club	£152.50
Dunclug Youth Forum	£739.27
Festival Dance Teachers' Association	£900.00
Glenravel Community Summer Scheme	£900.00
Harryville Partnership	£175.00
Kells and Connor Community Improvement Association	£593.00
Marlagh Educational & Cultural Group	£354.76

11 Information from Ballymena Borough Council 30 September 2014.

Moyasset Heritage & Cultural Society	£600.00
Moyasset True Blues	£600.00
Parkinson's Support Group	£300.00
Portglenone Senior Citizens	£304.75
Portglenone Senior Citizens' Arts & Craft Club	£284.05
Portglenone Senior Citizens' Thursday Bowling Club	£162.50
Rectory Residents' Association	£900.00
Seven Towers Senior Citizens' Club	£600.00
Still Active Club	£650.00
Still Active Club - St Patrick's Church	£700.00
The Carson Project	£286.06
The Tollbar Dancers	£900.00
Tullygarley & District Residents' Association	£833.47
Tullymore Rural Amenities Group	£652.85
Uganda Association	£300.00
Warren Cultural & Education Society	£560.00
Waveney Youth Centre	£488.24
Ballykeel Together Development Association	£300.00
Cullybackey Senior Citizens	£390.00
Hope Centre (BFASG)	£205.06
Mid Antrim Ulster Special Constabulary	£596.75
Polish Saturday School Ballymena	£300.00
Ballymena & District Carers' Group	£300.00
Ballymena North Partnership	£111.99
Bann Maine West	£300.00
Breathe Easy Ballymena Lung Support Group	£130.38
Glenravel & District Community Residents' Group	£300.00
Glenravel Youth Club	£175.00
Harryville Men's Shed	£244.78
Kells & Connor Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club	£272.55
Total	**£67,764.14**

Ballymoney[12]

Dervock and District Community Group	£1,050.00
Bendoorah Apprentice Boys Cultural Society	£1,300.00
Topp Star Of The North Pipe Band	£1,400.00
Fuse FM	£1,400.00
Ballymoney Evergreen Club	£350.00
Dunaghy Flute Band	£700.00
Carnany Community Association	£350.00
Carnany Community Association Youth Club	£350.00
Glebeside Community Ass	£950.00
Japanese Cultural Centre	£600.00
Ballybogey Community Association	£1,300.00
Refuge/ The Wash Basin	£350.00
Castle Kidz	£700.00
Derrykeighan & District Community Association	£700.00
Ballymoney Resource Centre	£350.00
Killyrammer District Community Ass	£550.00
St James Youth Club	£500.00
Cloughmills Community Ass	£950.00
Edeb Accordion Band	£950.00
Cloughmills Community Action Team	£900.00
Cloughmills Boy & Girls Football Club	£700.00
Lisnagaver Flute Band	£950.00
Castle Community Ass	£1,050.00
Rasharkin Community Association	£940.00
Cheers Youth Club	£700.00
Lavin Flute Band	£350.00
Ballymoney Evergreen Club	£350.00
Kingdom of Dalriada Ulster Scots Society	£700.00
Ullans Speakers Ass	£1,050.00
Royal British Legion Womens Section Ballymoney	£250.00
Dunloy Development Ass	£250.00
36th Ulster Memorial Drumming Club	£250.00
Ballybogey 50+ Club	£600.00
Cloughmills Community Youth Club	£250.00

12 Information from Ballymoney Borough Council 22 September 2014

Cloughmills Bowling Club	£250.00
Glebeside Womens Club	£250.00
Stranocum & District Development Group	£600.00
Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group	£1,300.00
Bushside Independent Flute Band	£250.00
Ballymoney WI	£250.00
Ballymoney Apprentice Boys Memorial Temperance LOL 956	£250.00
Ballymoney Old Vehicle Club	£250.00
Ballymaconnelly Renewal Group	£200.00
Bushvale Senior Citizens group	£250.00
Cloughmills and St Brigid's Primary School	£350.00
Cloughmills Golden Oldies	£320.00
North Antrim Cultural and Musical Society	£700.00
Royal British Legion	£350.00
Crown Defenders Flute Band Cloughmills	£350.00
Finvoy Rural Educational and Cultural Society	£350.00
Dervock Parent and Toddler Group	£350.00
Fab Femme	£350.00
Benvardin	£350.00
Glebeside Community Assciation Men's Group	£700.00
Stranocum Ulster Scots Cultural Heritage Society	£350.00
Glebe Rangers FC	£350.00
Bann Valley CA	£350.00
Cloughmills Cultural Historical Society	£350.00
Senior Citizens Friendship Group	£350.00
United Parish of Ballymoney, Finvoy and Rasharkin	£350.00
St James Presbyterian Church Holiday Club	£350.00
Ballymoney Welfare Group	£350.00
Kilraughts Friendship Club	£350.00
Rasharkin Residents Association	£350.00
Castle Youth Club	£350.00
Glengad Vintage Club	£350.00
Glebe-B-Tots	£350.00
Rasharkin Women's Group	£350.00
Total	**£39,010.00**

Banbridge[13]

Stagestruck	£7,400.00
Lower Iveagh Cultural & Heritage Society	£6,200.00
Laurencetown Summer Scheme	£5,000.00
Benraw Rural Community Association	£250.00
Kilmacrew & District Rural Community Group	£400.00
Waringsford & Tullyniskey Rural Comm Dev Assoc	£600.00
The Victoria Club	£335.00
Seapatrick Community Association	£600.00
Banbridge Orange Hall Committee	£1,050.00
The LLT Mini Me's Holiday Club	£2,000.00
Donard Summer Scheme	£3,000.00
Seapatrick Community Association	£200.00
Lisnavaragh Rural Community Association	£850.00
Anaclone Community Engagement Group	£750.00
Annaclone Summer Scheme	£3,000.00
Youth Action NI	£17,000.00
Rathfriland Royal British Legion Branch	£250.00
Moneyslane Cultural & Rural Dev Association	£250.00
Liatroim Fontenoys GAC	£987.00
Banbridge Phoenix	£500.00
South Down Bands Forum	£400.00
Sterritt Memorial Ulster Scots Society & Drumming	£680.00
Kinallen Rurl Community Dev Association	£250.00
Tullylish GAC	£300.00
Carnew Rural Development Association	£2,000.00
Rhythmn Youth Group	£2,160.00
Finnis Rural Development Association	£550.00
Crown Drumming Club & Ulster Scots Society	£150.00
LLT Community Association Youth	£1,000.00
Cloughskelt Rural & Cultural Association	£250.00
Katesbridge Community Association	£250.00
Banbridge Posy Club	£200.00
Closkelt Pipe Band	£250.00
ENP - Every Night Project	£2,500.00
Total	**£61,562.00**

13 Information from Banbridge District Council 22 September 2014.

Belfast[14]

Ashton Community Trust	£6,875.00
East Belfast Titanic Festival	£3,650.00
St Teresa's Youth Centre	£1,000.00
Northern Ireland Youth Forum	£3,200.00
The Basement Youth Club	£8,000.00
Friends of the Grove Park	£400.00
Fortwilliam & Macrory Presbyterian Church	£12,240.00
Totally Trim	£500.00
Finaghy Cross-roads Group	£1,700.00
New Life Counselling	£1,900.00
Ugandan Community in NI	£500.00
Aisling Ghear Theatre Company	£995.00
Queen's University -School of History & Anthropology	£1,000.00
Ballymurphy Research Group	£1,000.00
Anti Racism World Cup	£1,250.00
Rivers Community Project	£5,320.00
Ransom Productions	£2,240.00
Children for Peace in Ireland	£4,240.00
Finaghy Community Centre Committee	£2,620.00
PSNI	£2,000.00
Ballymacarrett Arts and Cultural Society	£26,300.00
St. Peter's Immaculata Youth Club	£1,000.00
Barnardo's Tuar Ceatha Services	£8,550.00
St Colmcilles/Gilnahirk Cross Community Group	£600.00
Cumann Culturtha Mhic Reactain	£3,000.00
Lamb Films Ltd	£3,000.00
Polish Association NI	£3,000.00
Pobal	£9,525.00
Ardoyne Youth Providers Forum	£7,000.00
Feile an Phobail	£5,812.00
Tigers Bay Mens Support Group	£11,200.00
South West Action Team (SWAT)	£13,000.00
Village Focus Group	£5,500.00
African and Carribean Support Organisation Northern Ireland(ACSONI)	£4,623.00

14 Information from Belfast City Council 24 September 2014.

Northern Ireland Inter Faith Forum	£1,000.00
Arts for All	£6,620.00
Ligoniel Improvement Association	£12,740.00
East Belfast Partnership	£3,500.00
Love Music/Hate Racism NI	£4,200.00
Sandy Row Residents Association	£6,637.00
The Mac	£7,250.00
St John Bosco Amateur Boxing Club	£5,300.00
George Best Community Cup	£1,000.00
Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	£9,500.00
PVN (Place of Victory for all Nations)	£4,000.00
Early Years - the Organisation for Children	£3,500.00
Stadium Projects	£8,942.00
Churches' Community Work Alliance N.I.	£2,000.00
Tar Isteach	£10,500.00
Corrymeela Community	£6,450.00
Belvoir Somme Association	£1,000.00
Ligoniel Family Centre	£1,400.00
McGurks Bar Massacre Group	£1,000.00
Forthspring Inter Community Group	£8,500.00
West Kirk Community Project	£6,950.00
University of Ulster	£1,000.00
Success Dragon & Lion Dance Association	£1,500.00
Sandy Row Cultural Society	£1,000.00
St Patrick's College and Boys Model School Community Relations Project	£6,002.00
NICE	£3,000.00
East End Great War Society	£3,000.00
Unionist Centenary Committee	£6,000.00
The First Step Drop-In Centre	£3,000.00
Suffolk/Lenadoon Interface Group	£13,745.00
Co-operation Ireland	£3,000.00
TIDES Training	£5,000.00
Taughmonagh Community Forum Limited	£3,000.00
Northern Ireland Tolerance Educational & Cultural Assoc	£3,770.00
Annadale Haywood Residents Association	£10,500.00
The Vine Centre	£1,000.00
EXIT	£1,350.00

Green Shoot Productions	£13,725.00
Donegall Pass Community Forum	£4,994.00
Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	£14,740.00
Sandy Row Community Forum	£10,000.00
Culture Night Belfast	£1,000.00
APAC	£4,500.00
Ravenlink Residents' Group	£1,000.00
Forbairt Feirste	£1,000.00
Farset Youth and Community Development Ltd	£3,000.00
Habitat for Humanity	£6,900.00
Irish Football Association	£4,640.00
FACES - Family and Child Empowerment Services	£1,000.00
North Belfast Play Forum	£19,000.00
Beyond Skin	£4,300.00
North Belfast Interface Network	£12,100.00
International Brigade Commemoration Committee	£1,000.00
Ionad Uibh Eachach	£570.00
An Eochair	£1,620.00
Prime Cut Productions	£15,300.00
Radio Failte Teo	£1,000.00
Artillery Youth Centre	£6,000.00
Immaculata Junior Football Club	£1,000.00
Women's Information Group	£1,000.00
GEMS NI LTD	£923.00
Lagan Village Somme Society	£4,120.00
The Bytes Project	£2,200.00
Women's Common Paths Network	£6,828.00
Ulster Covenant and Historical Society	£4,000.00
PS.150	£1,000.00
Divis Joint Development Committee	£8,565.00
Crossover Basketball NI	£15,550.00
Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre	£12,305.00
Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)	£6,000.00
Mountainview Battlefields Assoc	£600.00
East Belfast Community's Historical & Cultural Association	£7,500.00
Black Box Trust	£3,200.00
Chinese Welfare Association (N.I.)	£11,000.00

Shankill Area Project	£12,820.00
St Stephen's Scouts	£1,000.00
Ullans Academy	£6,615.00
Willowfield Parish Community Association	£4,450.00
Ardoyne Youth Club	£9,300.00
The Cosy Historical and Cultural Society	£1,000.00
Woodvale Community Initiative	£2,500.00
The Immaculata Amateur Boxing Club	£1,000.00
Mornington Community Centre	£5,200.00
NIFTL	£1,000.00
Donegal Pass Events Committee	£1,000.00
Hazelwood College	£3,000.00
Inner East Youth Project	£6,700.00
Polish Saturday School	£500.00
Belfast Interface Project	£900.00
Mornington Community Centre	£5,000.00
East Belfast Area Youth Project	£3,930.00
Glen Colin Residents Association	£3,350.00
Teach Na Failte	£6,016.00
Amazing Brains NI CIC	£1,580.00
Village Focus Group	£3,450.00
Ulster Hall	£3,000.00
NIDS Northern Ireland Dialouge Society	£1,380.00
St. John Vianney Youth Centre	£6,550.00
COPE	£1,750.00
NICHS Limited	£1,000.00
Bryson Intercultual	£4,000.00
Law Centre(NI)	£5,000.00
36th (Ulster) Division Memorial Association	£6,000.00
Rainbow Health Ltd	£1,000.00
Round Tower Community Project	£1,000.00
Tigers Bay History Group	£4,000.00
The Belfast Boxing Ring	£17,550.00
Ballymac Friendship Trust	£18,500.00
Culturlann McAdam O Fiaich	£25,950.00
MACARA	£930.00
Women into Politics/Downtown Womens Group	£1,430.00

Tinderbox Theatre Company	£2,500.00
Ballysillan Youth for Christ Community Drop In Centre	£1,000.00
Replay Theatre Company	£1,000.00
Upper Andersonstown Limited Youth Network	£2,500.00
Tar Anall	£3,284.00
Deanby Youth Centre	£1,000.00
Falls Women's Centre	£1,000.00
Indian Community Centre	£3,000.00
diVERSE	£800.00
Corpus Christi Youth Centre	£4,180.00
Polish Mission Church	£2,585.00
Star Neighbourhood Centre	£2,400.00
Skegoneill and Glandore Common Purpose	£1,000.00
Albert Foundry Football Club	£900.00
North Belfast Women's Initiative & Support Project (NBWISP)	£5,645.00
Fight Academy	£850.00
Grove United Football Club	£950.00
Belfast Primary Schools Football Association	£846.00
Loughside Football Club	£7,442.00
Woodvale Football Club	£9,790.00
Glenbank Community Association	£3,000.00
Adullam Christian Ministries	£6,700.00
East Belfast Alternatives	£7,938.00
Belfast Sparta Fooball Club	£510.00
North Belfast Alternatives	£3,000.00
Centre For Health And Well Being	£2,610.00
Balmoral Filipino Community Association	£600.00
Ballymurphy Research Group	£3,000.00
Community Dialogue	£10,000.00
Belfast Festival at Queens	£6,000.00
Polish Saturday School	£1,000.00
Glentoran Partnership	£540.00
Terry Enright Foundation	£2,490.00
ArtsEkta	£10,680.00
Polish Association NI	£3,000.00
Bloomfield Football Club	£400.00
Queen's Basketball Club	£235.00

Romanian Roma Community Association Northern Ireland	£5,214.00
Culture Night Belfast	£350.00
LORAG	£7,580.00
An Droichead	£6,500.00
Markets Development Association	£18,500.00
South Belfast Alternatives	£8,000.00
Greater Village Regeneration Trust	£8,572.00
Bryson Lagan Sports	£1,000.00
St. James Community Forum	£8,725.00
East Belfast Partnership	£5,000.00
Short Strand Community Forum Women's Group	£17,544.00
Short Strand Community Forum	£25,380.00
Soroptimists International Of Great Britain & Ireland	£600.00
Belfast South Community Resource	£10,795.00
NI Football Tennis Open League	£1,000.00
Peace and Reconciliation Group	£5,220.00
Newstart Education Centre	£2,070.00
Royal Irish Rangers Old Comrades Assoc.	£6,520.00
Friends of the Fallen (Farset)	£2,100.00
NI Anti-Poverty Network	£1,000.00
Men Of The North	£740.00
Ballysillan Community Forum	£2,600.00
Ardmonagh Women's Group	£1,550.00
Woodvale Presbyterian Church	£225.00
FASA	£780.00
Greater Whitewell Community Surgery	£5,000.00
Womens Resource & Development Agency	£8,611.00
Spectrum Centre	£9,060.00
Youthworks CIC	£8,000.00
The HUBB Community Resource Centre	£15,610.00
Horn of Africa People's Aid Northern Ireland	£4,000.00
Ocean Youth Trust Ireland	£1,000.00
JamLive Studios	£1,000.00
Opportunity Youth	£950.00
Silver Threads	£2,080.00
Belfast Metropolitan College	£5,820.00
Just Books Collective Limited	£800.00

Christian Brothers School	£1,000.00
Cregagh Wanderers Youth Football Club	£650.00
Include Youth/give and Take Scheme	£3,250.00
YouthCom	£5,000.00
Shankill Church of the Nazarene	£400.00
Queen's University Belfast Students Union	£1,000.00
Shankill Women's Centre	£15,148.00
Clarendon Development Association	£1,345.00
Short Strand Partnership	£4,000.00
Seaview Enterprises	£21,000.00
St. Andrews FC	£1,000.00
Suffolk Community Forum	£1,880.00
Healing Through Remembering	£3,000.00
Newhill Football Club	£1,000.00
Coiste Na N-Iarchimi	£1,200.00
Youth Link NI	£11,000.00
Denmark Street Community Centre	£1,300.00
Holy Family Youth Centre	£7,522.00
Carrick Hill Residents Association	£11,525.00
Gleann Amateur Boxing Club	£8,725.00
St Matthews FC	£980.00
North Belfast Community Development & Transition Group	£5,000.00
Nigerian Association Northern Ireland	£640.00
Rosario Youth Centre	£2,350.00
West Kirk Community Project	£3,450.00
New Lodge Arts	£18,806.00
Divis Youth Project	£2,810.00
Charter NI	£13,695.00
Malachians Football Club	£1,000.00
East Belfast Arts Festival	£1,000.00
1st South Belfast Somme Society	£1,000.00
Northshore Somme Society	£825.00
Solway Stars FC	£10,200.00
One World Creative	£735.00
1st North Belfast Somme Historical & Cultural Society	£825.00
Minority Focus	£1,000.00
Newtown Forest Football Club	£1,000.00

The Happy Stitchers	£4,360.00
Connswater Community and Leisure Services	£5,000.00
SOS Bus NI	£1,000.00
Church of Pentecost (Belfast)	£970.00
Cathedral Quarter Trust	£6,500.00
Fitzroy Presbyterian Church	£2,770.00
Fairhill Community Association	£2,300.00
Russian Speaking Community Northern Ireland	£915.00
Ardoyne Fleadh Project	£3,850.00
Interaction Belfast	£12,027.00
Bruiser Theatre Company	£4,000.00
Youth Initiatives	£14,396.00
Greater Shankill Alternatives	£11,500.00
Twaddell Womens Intercommunity Group	£3,000.00
Mediation Northern Ireland	£5,000.00
QE1 Private Members Club	£992.00
Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group	£7,430.00
Eastside Amateur Boxing Club	£800.00
Donegal Celtic Youth Football Club	£400.00
Belfast Junior Giants	£400.00
Phoenix Basketball Club	£575.00
Arts and Disability Forum	£1,000.00
PeacePlayers International - Northern Ireland (PPI-NI)	£6,520.00
Marrowbone Residents Association	£7,278.00
Santos Football Club	£720.00
Northern Ireland Orienteering	£4,160.00
Fane Street Primary School	£1,000.00
Francis Hutcheson Institute	£500.00
Northern Ireland Childrens Enterprise	£5,000.00
South Belfast Roundtable	£5,000.00
Townsend Street Social Outreach Centre	£615.00
Wave Trauma Centre	£2,660.00
Springboard Opportunites Ltd	£1,000.00
Friendship for Integrated Development Association NI	£1,000.00
Mount Community Association	£3,300.00
Indian Malayali Association	£400.00
Sirocco Youth Football Club	£900.00

An Eochair	£3,900.00
Success Dragon & Lion Dance Association	£500.00
Andersontown Malayee Association	£400.00
NICEM	£5,000.00
Gleann Football Club	£450.00
Whiterock Creche Association	£520.00
EPIC	£1,000.00
Norman Whiteside Sports Facility	£7,010.00
The Wider Circle	£2,000.00
Golden Thread Gallery	£3,000.00
Indian Senior Citizens Club	£1,250.00
The Fellowship of Messines Association	£2,820.00
South Belfast Malecare	£1,760.00
Lower Shankill Community Association	£14,156.00
An Munia Tober	£1,000.00
Prison Fellowship Northern Ireland	£875.00
Lower Oldpark Community Association	£3,550.00
1st North Belfast Ladies Somme Society	£3,350.00
All Nations Ministries	£1,000.00
Association Darfur of NI (ADNI)	£1,500.00
Belfast Library and Society for Promoting Knowledge (The Linen Hall Library)	£1,200.00
Blackie River Community Group	£13,600.00
Community Watersports Co. CIC	£2,600.00
Dalriada Culture & Historical Society	£2,700.00
Embrace Ballysillan	£4,000.00
Kabosh	£5,000.00
Newington Youth FC	£3,100.00
Public Achievement	£2,963.00
Smashing Times Theatre Company	£3,040.00
Springfield Star Blackmountain	£3,500.00
TDK Community Group	£1,500.00
Terra Nova Productions	£5,520.00
The Institute for Conflict Research	£8,488.00
Wishing Well Family Centre	£2,900.00
The 174 Trust	£4,500.00
God Loves You	£700.00
Upper Springfield Resource Centre	£6,500.00

Greater New Lodge Youth Forum	£5,300.00
Star Amateur Boxing Club	£3,950.00
Dee Street Youth Support	£3,200.00
Roden Street Community Development Group	£12,000.00
Whitecity Community Development Assoc	£2,650.00
Greencastle Community Association	£1,600.00
Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne	£5,800.00
Crosscollyer Street Church Sunday School	£4,000.00
Cavehill Antrim Road Regeneration	£2,800.00
Skegoneill Community Group	£6,000.00
Westland Community Group	£2,500.00
Ardoyne Women's Group	£4,790.00
Tigers Bay Concerned Residents Association	£5,100.00
Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre	£5,500.00
Ardoyne Kickems GAC	£6,500.00
Welcome Community Group	£700.00
Clonard Residents Association	£2,000.00
Falls Youth Providers	£12,200.00
The Dean Clarke Foundation	£5,200.00
Glen Community Parent and Youth Group	£4,900.00
Graymount Community Group	£700.00
Shamrock Football Club	£2,900.00
Wheelworks	£3,150.00
Families at the waterworks (fishing club)	£1,000.00
Ainsworth Residents Group	£2,500.00
Falls Residents Association	£2,500.00
Crusaders Youth Football Club	£7,416.00
Sporting Cromac AFC	£1,600.00
Beechmount Residents Association	£2,000.00
South City Resource & Development Centre	£6,640.00
Empire Residents Association	£2,200.00
Lagan Village Youth & Community Group	£3,700.00
The Skainos Project	£3,500.00
Bloomfield Community Association	£3,000.00
Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership	£5,200.00
Whiterock Westrock Residents Association	£1,700.00
Short Strand Drugs Awareness Group	£900.00

Colin Glen Trust	£3,000.00
Gort Na Mona Sports Association	£2,000.00
Loughview Community Action Partnership	£4,020.00
No Limit	£2,000.00
Shankill United Football Club	£1,500.00
St Matthew's Sports and Social Club	£2,000.00
Hannahstown Community Centre	£250.00
Harbour Lights Senior Womens Group	£700.00
Bridge Community Association	£400.00
Conway Senior Citizens	£950.00
West Belfast 50+ Forum	£700.00
Island Resource Centre	£400.00
Greater Shankill Senior Citizens Forum	£1,400.00
St Peter's Senior Citizen Group	£350.00
Men United	£800.00
Horn drive Senior Citizens Club	£800.00
Royal Scottish Country Dance Society	£350.00
Avoniel Over 50's Club	£1,050.00
Mountpottinger Presbyterian Senior Citizens	£350.00
Friends Of Chestnut Grove	£350.00
Highfield Fifty Plus Group	£850.00
Society of St Vincent de Paul, Mountainview	£800.00
Trinity New Lodge Senior Citizens Club Ass	£450.00
Walkway Community Association	£750.00
Oliver Plunkett Lunch Club	£450.00
Clara Park Tenants & Residents Association	£350.00
Joanmount Open Door Limited	£600.00
Brookvale Senior Citizens Assocation	£550.00
Midland Senior Citizens Club	£700.00
Docksiders Senior Mens Group	£400.00
Cullingtree Senior Group	£450.00
Sailortown Mother and Toddlers	£550.00
Sailortown, Cultural and Historical Society	£950.00
John Vianney Senior Citizens Club	£550.00
Woodvale/Cambrai Youth & Community Group	£300.00
Glen Community Centre's Tuesday Group	£900.00
174 Older Peoples Group	£700.00

Time 4 u	£250.00
St Kevins	£350.00
Newtownards Road Women's Group Limited	£950.00
Quality User Group Seniors	£450.00
166 Sydenham Cross Community Support Centre Ltd	£500.00
Disabled Drivers Association NI	£600.00
Beech Hall Members Advisory Committee	£300.00
Middle Anderstown Festival Group	£350.00
Clonard Senior Citizens Group	£650.00
St. Oliver Plunkett Parish	£1,300.00
Belles of Belmont Ladies Club	£700.00
Manor Street/Cliftonville Community Group	£550.00
Divis Youth Project	£900.00
Volunteer Now	£800.00
Sydenham Court	£350.00
Ardavon Park Senior Citizens	£100.00
Young at Heart Seniors Group	£500.00
Argyle Senior Citizens Group	£500.00
East Belfast Mission	£1,300.00
Ballymacarrett Community & Cultural Engagement Project	£400.00
Markets Community Centre	£850.00
South Belfast Area Youth Project	£900.00
KOG Community Action group	£350.00
Woodvale Young at Heart 50+ Group	£650.00
Sydenham Mothers and Toddlers	£300.00
Sydenham Community Development Agency	£300.00
Sydenham United Football Club	£300.00
Automatic School Of Dance	£300.00
Connswater Womens Group	£300.00
St Teresa's Seniors	£250.00
Whitecity Over 50's Group	£450.00
Glen Community Centre, Senior Citizen Group	£250.00
West Belfast District Scout Council	£400.00
The Point	£650.00
Hammer Youth Club	£1,150.00
Dockers Amateur Boxing Club	£250.00
Lower Andersontown Mothers Support Group	£350.00

Hobby Horse Playgroup	£500.00
Pádraig Sáirséil CLG	£250.00
City Church	£1,150.00
Duncairn Community Centre Committee	£250.00
Lagan Legacy	£250.00
Windsor Women's Centre	£350.00
Grace Women's Development	£500.00
The Golden Girls	£100.00
Ballymacarrett Royal Black District Chapter no 4 120th Anniversary Committee	£100.00
Belfast Central Mission	£100.00
NOW	£250.00
Knocknagoney Community Centre Management Committee	£650.00
Voices: Republican Ex-Prisoners Group	£350.00
Hostelling International Northern Ireland	£350.00
Taiwan NI	£100.00
Greater Shankill Men Shed	£300.00
Senior Moments Project	£500.00
Harmony Court Residents Group	£300.00
NI Retired Police Officers Association Belfast Branch	£200.00
Men at Lesiure	£150.00
Dee Street Afterschools Project	£300.00
The Hopefuls	£100.00
Inverary Community Centre Committee	£800.00
Carr's Glen Primary School	£150.00
Southlink Day Centre Ltd	£150.00
Sacred Heart Pensioners Club	£100.00
Friends of Careers N Kids	£150.00
Glencairn Residents Group	£150.00
Marrowbone Residents Association	£200.00
Total	**£1,688,915.00**

Carrickfergus[15]

Greenisland Football Club	£1,295.00
Northern Ireland Croatia Exchange Project	£1,000.00
Carrickfergus YMCA	£800.00
Friends of the 36th Ulster Division Carrickfergus Association	£800.00
Whitehead Community Association	£4,025.00
Glenfield Community Association	£2,500.00
Greenisland Community Association	£3,275.00
Carrickfergus Churches Forum	£5,051.00
Woodburn Playgroup	£425.00
Greengables Pre-school	£650.00
UDR Association	£200.00
Sunnylands Nursery School	£1,110.00
Sir Henry Inglesbury's Fife & Drums Corps	£3,500.00
Kragfergus Living History Group	£6,138.00
Whitehead Friends of the Fallen	£3,300.00
Bennett's Chosen Few	£3,492.00
2062 (Carrickfergus) Squadron ATC	£369.40
Hawthorne Adult Centre	£450.00
Synergy @ JVC	£1,150.00
Carrickfergus Drumming Club	£1,240.00
Total	**£40,770.40**

Castlereagh[16]

Tuesday Break	£582.00
TAGIT	£620.00
Orange Order	£590.00
Newtownbreda Community Group	£720.00
Killynure Community Association	£1,150.00
Coronation Park Community Association	£653.00
Carryduff GAA	£710.00
Bright Lights	£2,310.00
Braniel Community Association	£2,304.00
Ballybeen Women's Centre	£1,374.00
Association of Belvoir Churches	£680.00

15 Information from Carrickfergus Borough Council 11 November 2014.

16 Information from Castlereagh Borough Council 26 September 2014.

29th Scout Group £680	£2,250.00
37th Scout Group	£2,490.00
Dungoyne Boys	£1,000.00
Carryduff Colts	£1,760.00
Boys Brigade	£1,000.00
Belvoir Women's Group	£1,000.00
Milltown Community Association	£750.00
Ballybeen Men's Motivation Group	£427.00
Belvoir, Best Hill Comm Assoc	£607.00
Crossover Basketball NI	£480.00
Dreamscheme NI	£700.00
Intercultural Friendship	£620.00
Moneyreagh & District CA	£485.00
Total	**£31,140.80**

Coleraine[17]

Kilcranny House	£1,405.00
Playhouse Activity Centre	£1,000.00
Coleraine Cricket Club	£200.00
Macosquin Presbyterian Friendship Group	£318.75
Child's Smile	£3,000.00
Glenkeen fife & Drum Band	£510.00
Macosquin Community Association	£750.00
Glenullin & Agivey Conservation & Dev. Group	£550.00
Boveedy Springwell Club	£408.00
Boveedy Community Association	£1,000.00
Patchwork Ireland	£700.00
St Joseph's College	£1,000.00
NEELB	£1,000.00
Causeway Rural & Urban Nertwork	£3,000.00
Windyhall Community Association	£700.00
Ballyrashane Thursday Fellowship Group	£729.00
North Coast Intergrated College	£1,562.50
Focus On Family	£635.00
Portstewart Clergy Fraternal	£290.00
Coleraine Borough Churches Forum	£2,900.00

17 Information from Coleraine Borough Council 19 September 2014.

Workers' Educational Association	£820.50
Kilrea & District Ulster Scots	£630.00
Big Telly Theatre Company	£2,999.50
Garvagh Community Forum	£270.00
Coleraine Methodist Church	£900.00
St Paul's Church,	£1,685.00
Coleraine Festival Committee	£1,000.00
Coleraine Borough 50+ Forum	£250.00
Ballymoney Community Resource Centre	£3,423.00
Garvagh Historical Association	£535.00
University of Ulster	£975.00
North West Phoenix Group	£1,000.00
Portstewart Royal British Legion	£500.00
Somerset Residents Association	£1,000.00
Vineyard Compassion	£925.00
Causeway Coast Vineyard	£620.70
Total	**£39,191.95**

Cookstown[18]

Rock, Pomeroy and Donaghmore Historical Societies	£500.00
Path to Recovery	£120.00
Lissan Cross Community Play Group	£1,200.00
Friends of the Somme Association	£800.00
Speedwell	£500.00
Parents & Friends of Phoenix IPS	£800.00
Kildress Kare	£800.00
Dunnamore Community Group	£500.00
Cookstown Archery Club	£500.00
Bonn & District Community Association	£500.00
Parkview Community Group	£800.00
Killymoon Community Group	£500.00
Cookstown North Community Group	£1,000.00
Pomeroy Afterschool Leader	£650.00
Gortalowry Residents Grp	£350.00
Girls Allowed Stewartstown	£700.00
Ratheen, Greenvale and Sullenboy Residents Ass	£350.00

18 Information from Cookstown District Council 22 September 2014

Pomeroy Players	£1,000.00
The Monday Club	£1,000.00
Mid Ulster Section RSPBA	£350.00
Gort Kids Afterschool Club	£650.00
Loup Womens Group	£1,000.00
Ballybriest Pipe Band	£845.00
Beacon Playgroup	£350.00
Ballyronan Womens Group	£700.00
Ballinderry Historical Association	£700.00
Insight	£350.00
Superstars Club	£1,000.00
Coyles Cottage Womens Group	£1,000.00
Pomeroy Resource Centre	£350.00
Magheraglass Womens Grp	£1,000.00
Stewartstown Community Group	£1,000.00
Cookstown and Dungannon Womens Aid	£1,000.00
Moneymore Activity Group	£1,000.00
Moneymore Variety Group	£700.00
Tullylagan Pipe Band	£700.00
Stewartstown & District Support Group	£700.00
Cookstown Local History Group	£350.00
Coagh & District Local History Group	£1,000.00
Ballinderry Bridge Parochial Centre Bowling Club	£350.00
Coagh Community Crossroads Club	£350.00
Cookstown Local History group	£650.00
Desertlyn Bowling Club	£350.00
Fairhill Hall Development assoc	£350.00
Gortalowry Park Residents Assoc.	£350.00
Gortalowry house	£350.00
Lissan GAA	£350.00
Molesworth Street Summer Club	£350.00
Moneymore Art Group	£650.00
Moree Community Assoc.	£350.00
Muintirevlin Historical society	£505.00
N Ireland Ex Fire Fighters- Cookstown	£650.00
Parkview Community Group	£350.00
Pomeroy Development Projects	£650.00

Pomeroy Pre School Play Group	£650.00
Pomeroy WI	£350.00
Queen Elizabeth II Primary PTA	£650.00
Ratheen Greenvale & Sullenboy residents assoc.	£350.00
Riverside & Black Hill Community Group	£350.00
Rock Community Association	£650.00
Rock & District Historical Group	£650.00
Sandholes Community Group	£350.00
Ardtrea & Desertcreat Senior Citizens Group	£300.00
Ballytrea Parent Support Group	£300.00
Broughderg Area Development Association LTD	£300.00
Cairdeas Eoghain	£300.00
Cloughfin Pipe Band	£300.00
Cookstown and Magherafelt Volunteer Centre	£300.00
CRAFT	£300.00
Derryloran Boyne Defenders	£300.00
Derryloran Community Association	£300.00
Discovering Kids Playgroup	£300.00
Dunamore Community Ass	£300.00
FAST	£300.00
Gateway	£300.00
Kildress Wolfe Tones	£300.00
Mid Ulster Canoe & Kayak Club	£300.00
Mid Ulster Child Contact Centre	£300.00
Naíscoil Eoghain	£300.00
Royal British Legion	£300.00
St. John's Junior Youth Club	£300.00
Stewartstown Amateur Dramatic Society	£300.00
Stewartstown Local History Group	£300.00
The Hub BT80	£300.00
Tobin Youth Centre Moortown Ltd	£300.00
Total	**£44,820.00**

Craigavon[19]

Craigavon Historical Society	£1,154.00
Mourneview & Grey Estates Community Association	£920.00
South Lough Neagh Historical Society	£1,625.00
South Lough Neagh Regeneration Association	£1,915.00
Goal Line Youth Trust	£2,925.00
ABC Community Network	£513.00
ESERG	£833.00
Light of the World Ministries	£1,925.00
Muslim Association of Craigavon	£554.00
Craigavon Alliance of Portuguese Speakers	£1,833.00
Craigavon Intercultural Programme	£1,775.00
Richmount Rural Community Association	£648.00
Central Craigavon Baptist Church	£519.00
Dialogue For Diversity	£400.00
Donacloney Community Craft Group	£570.00
Lough Neagh Heritage Boating Association	£990.00
Magheralin & Dollingstown Community Fun Day Committee	£1,000.00
Portadown FC Youth	£1,000.00
Richmount Rural Community Association	£2,000.00
Scotch Street Youth Club	£2,000.00
Bannside Community Group	£800.00
Brownstown Owners and Tenants Association	£1,000.00
CIP - Oasis Youth Project	£900.00
Maghery Youth Club	£1,000.00
Sarsfields Youth Club	£1,000.00
Total	**£29,799.00**

19 Information from Craigavon Borough Council 24 October 2014.

Derry[20]

CALMS	£2,420.00
Club United	£13,000.00
Top of the Hill 2010	£4,950.00
Youth Action N.I.	£5,000.00
Bob Harte Memorial Trust	£5,000.00
Women Together	£3,000.00
Clooney Residents Association	£7,770.20
Destined Ltd	£5,000.00
Foyle Multicultural Forum	£2,000.00
Widows Mite Victims Support Group	£1,000.00
Understanding Local History	£1,000.00
Headliners	£5,512.00
Ulster Special Constabulary Association	£1,940.00
Top of the Hill Youth & Community FC	£1,000.00
Women Into Irish History	£5,000.00
Pat Finucane Centre	£1,000.00
Inner City Activity Group	£1,000.00
Teach na Failte	£2,000.00
International School for Peace Studies	£1,000.00
Show Racism the Red Card	£1,000.00
African and Caribbean Association of Foyle	£1,000.00
Towards Understanding & Healing	£1,000.00
Dialogue Towards Faith Understanding	£1,000.00
Polish Abroad Re-Launch Event	£6,000.00
Cross Community Schools Project	£2,000.00
Summer Diversionary at Interface	£1,000.00
Derry Travellers Support Group	£1,000.00
Summer Soccer Camp	£1,000.00
Drumahoe Out of Schools Scheme	£1,000.00
Chinese Cultural Service for Chinese and Local People	£1,000.00
Royal Wedding Tea Party	£1,000.00
Cross Community Arts Project	£1,000.00
Caw/Nelson Drive Action Group	£3,250.00
The Whistle Project	£5,000.00
Cathedral Youth Club	£1,000.00

20 Information from Derry City Council 19 September 2014

The Junction	£5,600.00
North West Archaeological & Historical Society	£1,000.00
Kildoag & Bonds Glen Historical Association	£1,000.00
Kildoag Culture Group	£1,000.00
Kildoag Pipe Band	£1,000.00
Youth Action NI	£1,000.00
Peace & Reconciliation Group	£10,000.00
Interfaith North West	£1,000.00
Active Citizen Engaged (ACE)	£5,000.00
Irish Volunteer Commemorative Organisation	£1,000.00
Lincoln Courts Community Association	£1,000.00
Inishowen Development Partnership	£1,000.00
Irish Street Community Association	£9,998.00
Eglinton Building Bridges	£1,000.00
Drumahoe Primary PTA	£1,000.00
St. Columb's Park House	£17,000.00
Gasyard Wall Feile	£8,840.00
Grouped Parishes of Christ Church, Culmore, Muff & St.Peter's	£4,000.00
Stravaganza Production Company	£4,000.00
Waterside Area Partnership	£4,000.00
Bogside and Brandywell Initiative	£5,000.00
First Act Youth Theatre	£5,000.00
Bounce Education	£5,000.00
Newbuildings Utd FC	£2,480.00
Dove House Community Trust	£4,260.00
Tiny Tots Community Playgroup	£2,350.00
Waterside Theatre Company	£3,830.00
Maiden City Soccer Academy	£4,800.00
Pride of the Orange and Blue Auld Boys Flute Band	£2,425.00
North West Play Resource Centre	£5,000.00
Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership	£5,000.00
In Your Space NI	£5,000.00
Creggan Pre-School & Training Trust	£3,494.00
NICEM	£5,000.00
Holywell Trust	£5,000.00
WAVE Trauma Centre	£3,985.20
Total	**£243,904.40**

Down[21]

Ballynahinch Inter Church Group	£1,029.12
Castlewellan Area Bible Club	£1,000.00
Cumann Gaelach Leath Chathail, Downpatrick	£400.00
Downe Old Car Club	£600.00
Dunmore Rural Association	£920.00
East Down Athletic Club, Downpatrick	£400.00
Glor Uachtar Tire, Castlewellan	£2,041.00
Harmony Community Trust, Kilclief	£1,335.00
Inverbrena Local History Group, Strangford	£250.00
Lecale & Downe Historical Society	£1,400.00
Newcastle Comhaltas	£400.00
Russell Gaelic Union, Downpatrick	£400.00
Saintfield Rural Development Association	£600.00
Spa Wells Cultural Association, Ballynahinch	£500.00
St Brigid's PS Parents Association, Downpatrick	£400.00
Action for Children, Downpatrick	£800.00
Barnamaghery Rural Society	£195.00
County Down Rural Community Network	£1,500.00
Downpatrick Golf Club	£200.00
Dramability, Downpatrick	£200.00
Friends of the Museum, Downpatrick	£400.00
Mainstay DRP, Downpatrick	£400.00
Mediation NI	£499.70
Newcastle Comhaltas	£200.00
Saul GAC	£400.00
Downpatrick & County Down Railway Society	£350.00
St Patrick's Golf Club, Downpatrick	£200.00
Total	**£17,019.82**

Fermanagh[22]

Chernobyl Children	£279.38
Maguiresbridge Highland	£200.00
Thornton Donovan School	£200.00
Newtownbutler LOL 18	£243.76

21 Information from Down District Council 22 September 2014

22 Information from Fermanagh District Council 20 October 2014.

Ulster Project	£1,003.84
Monaghan Youth Federation	£10,000.00
Derrylin District RE	£200.00
Ballinamallard Accordion Band	£232.50
Kesh Development Association	£2,500.00
Royal British Legion	£255.16
Ballyreagh Silver Band	£500.00
The Exodus	£1,000.00
ARC Healthy Living Centre	£6,000.00
Comhairle Uladh CLG	£11,250.00
All Set Cross Culture	£300.00
Fermanagh County Board GAA	£7,200.00
Maguiresbridge Distr	£300.00
Maguiresbridge Villa	£500.00
Sliabh Beagh Development Association	£9,687.65
Derryclavin Pipe Band	£400.00
Moybrone Pipe Band	£1,250.00
Brackwede Enniskillen	£92.50
Lisbellaw LOL District	£350.00
Belcoo Sports and Festival	£250.00
Fitzpatrick Framing	£100.00
Summer Scheme 2012	£3,000.00
Supporting Community	£302.52
Newtownbutler Together	£200.00
Bunscoil an Traonagh	£200.00
Lisbellaw & South Fermanagh WW1 Society	£200.00
Tus Nua	£200.00
OTH CRS EOY GL 13.14 Orange Order	£3,600.00
Inniskillings Museum	£300.00
Mojo Mickeybo Perform	£500.00
Fermanagh Shadow You	£75.00
Erne Highland Dancer	£300.00
Maguiresbridge Friday Club	£180.00
Upper Lough Erne TDA	£180.00
Galoon Parish Church	£180.00
South East Fermanagh Foundation	£180.00
Loughkillygreen Hall	£180.00

Enniskillen District	£180.00
Brookeborough District Lodge	£180.00
Friends of Enniskillen Nursery School	£200.00
Enniskillen Rangers	£700.00
Ladies Friendship Group	£300.00
Carrowshee Park	£169.20
Women of the World	£8,736.00
Ballinamallard RBP	£224.49
Grand Orange Lodge	£3,600.00
Feugh Pipe Band	£196.69
St Mary's Youth Club	£500.00
Total	**£79,058.69**

Larne[23]

Factory Young Men's History Project	£365.00
Victoria Action Group	£280.00
PAL Larne	£250.00
Cairncastle Flute Band	£900.00
Tullygarley Community Development Group	£400.00
Tuesday Group	£2,000.00
Brookies Korner	£350.00
Carnlough Community Association	£941.41
Cairncastle LOL 692	£1,000.00
Ballygally Community Dev. Assoc.	£1,511.83
McNeill Theatre Hire (InterChurch Group)	£130.00
LIPS	£625.00
Dixon Park Community Association	£550.00
Kaleidoscope NI	£400.00
Glenarm Community Focus	£500.00
Larne District LOL No 1	£500.00
Larne YMCA	£1,500.00
Cairncastle Flute Band	£850.00
Craigyhill Seniors	£1,500.00
Linn Road Community Centre Management Committee	£300.00
Kilwaughter Rural Education & Cultural Group	£300.00
Total	**£15,153.24**

23 Information from Larne Borough Council 26 November 2014.

Limavady[24]

Limavady Historical and Cultural Society	£3,000.00
Ardinariff Historical and Cultural Society	£1,570.00
Limavady War project	£1,000.00
Burnfoot Community Youth Club	£2,000.00
NWLLA	£1,000.00
Hands that Talk	£1,000.00
Glenshane Community Development	£3,516.00
Kids Inn Out of School Club	£2,448.10
Roe Valley Residents Association	£8,000.00
Orchard Community Playgroup	£600.00
Naíscoil Neachtain, Dungiven	£800.00
Roe Valley, Bovalley, Coolessan, Glens Comm Ass	£3,000.00
Benbradagh Community Support	£970.00
Benedy Community Association	£1,000.00
Total	**£29,904.10**

Lisburn[25]

Lisburn YMCA	£2,880
Dunmurry Community Association	£2,125
Atlas Women's Group	£3,000
Dunmurry Positive Relations Partnership	£3,000
NICEM	£3,000
Glendowan FC	£1,600
Ballycarrickmaddy Primary School	£2,000
Total	**£17,605**

Magherafelt[26]

Dunamoney Community Group	£438.00
Dunamoney Flute Band	£584.00
Desertmartin Accordion Band	£438.00
Musical Appreciation Society of Maghera	£438.00
St Trea's GAC Ballymaguigan	£591.00
Maghera Sons of William	£474.00

24 Information from Limavady Borough Council 24 September 2014.

25 Information from Lisburn City Council 22 September 2014.

26 Information from Magherafelt District Council 8 October 2014.

King William III Community Group	£438.00
NHSCT	£438.00
The Evergreeens	£474.00
Megargy and District Game & Conservation Society	£1,781.00
Megargy Cultural and Community Group	£438.00
Magherafelt Volunteer Centre	£692.88
Swatragh Wednesday Club	£690.00
Granaghan and District Women's Group	£1,438.00
Union Road Magherafelt, Parent & Toddler Group	£215.00
Magherafelt Highland and Country Dance Group	£1,095.00
Three Spires Scout Troop	£3,095.00
Naiscoil Mhachaire Ratha	£1,555.00
Mid-Ulster School of Music	£1,095.00
Regimental Association of the Ulster Defence Association	£730.00
Tobertinys Community Playgroup	£551.00
Grand Dancers	£438.00
Bellaghy Women's Group	£3,095.00
Curran Flute Band	£438.00
Killelagh & St Johns Community Association	£980.00
Maghera Youth Connect	£634.00
Down Syndrome, South Derry Group	£1,095.00
Cranny Pipe Band	£438.00
Maghera Parish Caring Association	£699.00
Curragh Young Farmers Club	£675.00
Sperrin Cultural Awareness Association	£140.00
Eden Accordion Band	£657.00
Curragh Silver Band	£693.00
Tobermore Community Forum	£474.00
Beechland Neighbourhood Group	£1,050.00
Naiscoil ns Sperini	£1,095.00
Tobermore Community Projects	£766.00
Lough Fea Grouse & Conservation Trust	£1,365.00
Derganagh Training and Development Association	£683.80
Maghera Women's Institute	£690.00
Parent & Toddlers @ First	£154.45
Northern Health Trust, Magherafelt	£500.00
Tober Tinys Community Playgroup, Tobermore	£400.00

Magherafelt & District Road Safety Committee	£605.00
Slieve Gallion Community & Sports Development Group	£1,000.00
Curragh Silver Band	£1,000.00
Loughinsholin Cultural Music Group	£624.00
Cookstown & Magherafelt Volunteer Centre	£950.00
Killowen Neighbourhood Group	£989.00
The Three Spires Craft Club	£1,300.00
T.A.R.G.E.T. (Toome & Region Getting Everyone Together)	£1,995.00
Total	**£43,312.13**

Moyle[27]

Bushmills Peace Group	£250.00
North Antrim Dalriada Group	£250.00
North Antrim Cultural Society	£250.00
Tides	£250.00
Corrymeela Community	£250.00
Bushmills & Dunseverick Community Associations (joint event)	£250.00
Ballycastle Church Action	£250.00
Causeway Coast Peace Group	£500.00
East Antrim Republican Historical Group	£250.00
Armoy Community Association	£250.00
Cushendall Development Group with Bushmills Needles & Pins group	£500.00
BREF	£990.00
Rotary Club of Ballycastle	£250.00
Cairns Resident Group	£918.00
Glenariff Improvement Group	£400.00
Antrim to Gaza Group	£400.00
Armoy Girls' Brigade	£400.00
Total	**£6,608.00**

27 Information from Moyle District Council 22 September 2014

Newry[28]

Ballyholland Development Association, Newry	£1,500.00
Bessbrook Development Company	£200.00
Community Restorative Justice Newry & Armagh	£1,200.00
Cross Border Orchestra of Ireland, Dundalk	£2,000.00
Kilkeel Knights Basketball Club	£1,100.00
Kilkeel Parish Bridge Association Ltd	£7,367.00
Kingdom Youth Club, Kilkeel	£2,338.00
Mourne School of Dance, Kilkeel	£3,384.00
South Armagh Rural Women's Network, Crossmaglen	£2,600.00
Annalong Women's Institute	£3,189.00
Burren Community Assoc. Ltd	£944.00
Kilkeel Development Association	£4,889.00
Newry Rainbow Community	£6,689.00
Newry Orange District Lodge No.9	£3,300.00
Total	**£40,700.00**

Newtownabbey[29]

Educational Shakespeare Company	£1,250.00
The Care Centre Monkstown	£2,500.00
New Mossley Presbyterian Church	£2,643.56
Glengormley Community Churches Forum	£5,466.00
Abbey Historical Society	£2,514.38
Shared History Group	£1,250.00
Rathcoole Friends of the Somme	£2,450.00
Breakaway Blues	£3,715.00
Decade of Centenaries	£798.00
Newtownabbey Women's Group	£1,277.50
Success Dragon & Lion Dance Association	£2,500.00
South & East Antrim Community Federation	£5,224.50
Grange Youth & Community Group	£6,965.00
ORNE (Ophir Rugby Naomh Eanna)Community Partnership	£2,295.55
Carnmoney District Cultural Society	£3,671.25
Community Relations Forum	£1,875.00
Rathcoole Friends of the Somme	£5,005.00

28 Information from Newry and Mourne District Council 2 October 2014.

29 Information from Newtownabbey Borough Council 30 September 2014.

Northern Ireland Youth Forum Peer Mentoring Project	£1,875.00
Newtownabbey Arts and Cultural Network	£2,767.50
Rathfern Community Regeneration Group/Social Activity Centre	£487.50
Monkstown Community Association	£750.00
Bawnmore Residents Association	£6,300.75
New Mossley Youth Centre	£8,180.00
New Mossley Presbyterian Youth Club	£6,318.00
Newtownabbey Methodist Mission	£1,012.50
Whiteabbey Community Group	£2,391.00
Grange Residents Association	£1,125.00
Mayfield Community Association	£2,950.00
Monkstown Village Initiatives	£3,364.50
Ballyduff Community House	£1,016.25
Glengormley Amateur Boxing Club	£2,250.00
Total	**£92,188.74**

North Down[30]

Ploughshare	£950.00
Holywood Town Consortium	£1,000.00
ND Over 50's Forum	£1,545.00
Redburn Loughview Community Forum	£4,980.00
RECON	£4,000.00
Kilcooley Community Action Group	£8,150.00
Ballywalter Grdns Bonfire Committee	£1,000.00
First Step Community Action Group	£1,000.00
Breezemount Community Association	£4,134.09
Somme Memorial Club	£7,800.00
Bangor and ND Samaritans	£1,000.00
Bloomfield Community Assoc	£699.80
Holywood Irish Society	£700.00
Holywood Shared Town	£1,000.00
Polish Christmas Event	£486.52
Success Dragon & Lion Dance Assoc	£1,000.00
North Down Cultural Awareness Group	£3,600.00
Clandeboye Village Community Assoication	£2,400.00
Groomsport Cultural Awareness Group	£1,200.00

30 Information from North Down Borough Council 22 September 2014.

Down Capacity Building Initiative	£4,800.00
North Down Historical Cultural Society	£1,200.00
Total	**£52,645.51**

Omagh[31]

All Set Cross Cultural Project	£3,000.00
Edenderry Street Project	£1,000.00
Omagh Youth Council	£300.00
Killycurragh Orange LOL	£800.00
Omagh Ethnic Communities Support Group	£1,800.00
Royal Irish Rangers Assoc. - North Irish Militia Branch	£100.00
Dromore Ed. & Comm. P'ship	£5,865.00
Omagh Boys and Girls Club and Hospital Road Comm. Assoc.	£500.00
Omagh Youth Centre and OECSG	£420.00
Time IV a Change	£700.00
Strathroy Comm. Assoc. & Hosp Road. Comm. Assoc	£1,500.00
Beragh Care & Development Association Ltd	£1,000.00
Creggan Research & Education Services	£750.00
Eiri Na Greine	£1,850.00
Fintona Senior Citizens	£1,000.00
FOCUS - Young Adult Leadership Programme	£961.00
Gillygooley 2nd Youth	£200.00
Loughmacrory Community Development Association	£1,000.00
Omagh Support and Self Help Group	£2,300.00
Wise Owl	£300.00
Killycurragh Senior Citizens Club	£300.00
Kirlish Ulster Scots Association	£950.00
Owenkillew Community Development Association	£1,000.00
Total	**£27,596.00**

31 Information from Omagh District Council 22 September 2014

Strabane[32]

Border Arts	£18,075.00
Glenelly Historical Society	£4,019.35
Carebears Community Playgroup	£690.75
Strabane & Lifford Women's Centre	£1,744.14
Strabane Ethnic Community Association	£9,039.00
Strabane & Lifford LGBT Group	£6,200.90
Total	**£39,769.14**

32 Information from Strabane District Council 19 September 2014

Northern Ireland Assembly

Appendix 6

Other Papers and Correspondence

Summary – Stakeholder event

COFMDFM Inquiry into Building a United Community

Stakeholder Event - 28 January 2015

Summary

1. Experience of the implementation of T:BUC Commitments to date

a. T:BUC - general comments

- Some welcomed T:BUC as a promising strategy with good vision - it is going somewhere and something is happening at strategic level
- Others felt that there was little public confidence that anything would change or that there would be delivery on commitments
- Some questioned whether T:BUC is as ambitious as it says it is
- However it is too narrowly focused and should include all minority groups
- Experience of the implementation of T:BUC commitments to date has been mixed
- It was suggested that those with expertise have not been asked for their input into the delivery of T:BUC outcomes, while others felt that this is a good opportunity for the community and voluntary sector to be involved
- Concern that T:BUC is too focused on urban areas and not enough on rural areas
- Gap in defining 'sectarianism' and what is meant by 'good relations'
- Need to be clearer about what we mean by 'shared housing vs shared neighbourhoods'
- Concern about lack of clarity regarding plans to merge the Equality Commission and the Community Relations Council
- How do you get creative ideas into government? - Scottish model which brings in the business and third sector into the life of Government
- Use a shared approach to deal with issues
- T:BUC has to be seen as a core policy by Departments

b. Role of Community and Voluntary Sector/Civic Society in the implementation of T:BUC

- Process of co-design was seen as possible by some community and voluntary sector representatives
- T:BUC focuses too much on public service and publicly funded organisations and groups
- The policy is stopping people from getting actively involved in the process of practical involvement and submitting their proposals or comments
- How do small independent organisations get their voice heard
- Poor information coming out to the sector on the progress of T:BUC

c. Co-design

- Co-design was described as the latest iteration of consultation and partnership - not just about government listening but the active engagement of communities
- Mixed experience of co-design amongst attendees Not a panacea but can engage groups that don't normally get involved

- DoJ has led engagement and co-design process for interface areas - probably more straightforward to see the motivation for co-design at interface communities
- Experience of work at interfaces has been top-down and bottom-up - DoJ currently working with UU on evaluation of the first 3 year period of this work to feed in to the next period of this work
- Other experience of co-design was that it is excruciatingly frustrating and difficult, that it is laborious and doesn't take us where we need to be
- United Youth Programme cited as a positive example of a good co-design process, but concern about lack of follow-up action
- Timing of programme for summer youth programmes - slow to get off the ground and not enough time for organisations to do the necessary groundwork to make programmes effective
- Others felt that the summer programmes had been drawn up with participation of children and young people and that feedback had been built into the programme design

d. Allocation of funding

- Concern across the sector that due to uncertainty regarding funding those with expertise in cross-community work are moving to other areas and organisations with years of collective experience are having to close
- Funding creates competition so less likely to share expertise
- Criticism over the Central Good Relations Fund and delays in finding out about funding decisions. Funding validates and gives authority to your work - the funder can take on the role of champion

e. Evidence that learning from previous good practice has been incorporated into T:BUC

- Feeling that good practice by organisations had been ignored
- Lack of recognition of expertise and engagement with organisations should have come earlier

f. Co-ordination of activity amongst Government departments and statutory agencies

- Concern over lack of information and communication with stakeholders - unclear where responsibility lies
- Should be greater cross departmental co-ordination - conscious of silo effect
- Strategies don't necessarily join up. Potential gap with new councils picking up community planning
- A suggestion that T:BUC was misunderstood by statutory organisations at the start - made it harder to co-operate with the process

2. Best practice in bringing divided communities together and in developing shared space and shared services

a. Examples of good practice from organisations represented around the table

- Super centres - a neighbourhood renewal project in North Belfast
- Localised examples of good practice like the Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group - celebrating cultural difference
- South Tyrone Empowerment Partnership
- Women's organisations across the city
- Black Mountain Shared Space

- Getting communities to look jointly at shared issues rather than differences and not focusing on the religious make up of participants
- There's no need to reinvent the wheel - big programmes in youth work should be used if properly resourced
- IFA - Football for All initiative
- GAA - lacks universal appeal of IFA but works to engage with non-traditional areas through schools
- 2 arts programmes removing sectarian artwork
- Intercultural arts programme (migrant and indigenous culture)
- DCAL/DSD 3 year programme to promote volunteers
- Tramway , Glasgow - a development for multiple faiths in a secular space
- Neutral shared space in Belfast e.g. Custom House Square
- Botanic Primary School has undertaken good integration work with Roma children - part of a longer term experience with the Chinese community and Eastern Europeans.
- Fair employment legislation

b. How lessons learned from good practice are best publicised and circulated

- There was feeling amongst some that much good experience was not being considered as a model of best practice
- Every bit of good practice needs to be recorded and disseminated
- Weak communication to share best practice
- Ballynafeigh Community Development Association - better known internationally than in Northern Ireland - visitors come from all over the world to see it as an example of integration.
- Seminars and conferences tend to look abroad for speakers but there is local experience

c. Opportunities for learning between organisations

- Opportunities for learning between organisations is lost because of the competition over funding
- Youth Council and GAA working together to address issues of road safety
- Are groups aware of each other's actions?
- Is there a way of showcasing T:BUC progress?

d. The challenges faced in developing shared spaces and shared services

- Shared neighbourhoods are not regarded as valuable as divided communities
- There are different methods to building on shared space
- Language used when talking about shared space can sometimes be problematic
- Many within rural areas do not recognise that there is a sectarian divide
- T:BUC too focused on contested spaces due to sectarianism
- There are areas of space within the city e.g. Sirocco site which would be ideal for growing shared space within the city. But need something big and visible for communities to get behind
- Issue around funding - might give the same amount of funding to two different groups but one performs much better than the other. What are the other important factors?

- Redevelopment of Alexandra Park has not resulted in more integration
- More opportunities for mixed communities are needed
- Should we be trying to integrate communities - if communities feel safe living in their own areas they should be left to do so
- Disappointed by the focus on new shared spaces when many existing shared spaces need support to be sustained
- Not clear what is meant by shared space - concern about the connotation that people are being forced together

e. Opportunities to feed back into government policy

- We need feedback on the implementation of policy actions
- Feeling that by the time organisations submit their views on a consultation the policy has been written and views only identify gaps within the document.
- Stakeholders need to the ability to shape policy before decisions are taken and policy documents written
- Government puts sport in a box but it should be more collaborative - e.g. provision for young people beyond sport

3. Role of communities in policy and decision making, particularly in areas of contested space or interfaces

a. Experience of involving communities in policy and decision making

- Some people are hard to reach - e.g. Black Minority Ethnic, socially excluded etc.
- Some people have difficulty in responding to consultations - are there other ways to reach them?
- View of rural communities not being heard
- Submissions to consultations are ignored or not acted upon - departments don't listen
- Policies are written before community input is considered
- Arts and sports organisations - everything is built around local communities and champions

b. Barriers faced by communities wishing to be involved in policy and decision making

- Many citizens are not aware of the work of politicians in policy and legislation but should be their responsibility to find out
- Duplication of services
- Develop mechanisms for young people to have a say
- Need to look at the best way to engage - face to face not always the most effective
- Funding isn't always based on need and progress
- Civic space can become congested
- Community involvement needs to reflect the make up of community - more female/youth/ethnic minorities
- Policy documentation is too detailed for community consumption
- Alienation between community and decision making
- Consultations are not accessible - Departments should make use of existing bodies to make communities more aware of consultations that matter to them

- Policies should be developed with people rather than presenting them to people after they have been developed

c. How to build capacity within communities wishing to be involved in decision making

- Use social media more to find out what people think and get feedback
- Motivation is key to getting people involved
- Provide funding for focus groups
- Have a women's officer in each Council
- Youth Councils can help young people develop communication skills
- Consider provision of standardised pro forma for submissions
- Resource communities to give them the skills to engage
- Scottish model - representation from District Electoral Areas as a sub-structure of the council
- There are different demographics so a mechanism is need for engagement to ensure input
- Women are more and more exclude from communities - what role do women have in community and decision making?

d. The potential for 'community planning' to be a useful vehicle for community involvement in decision making

- Communities have to be at the front and centre
- Answers sit within communities - they can often give you the most cost effective and easy way to implement a solution
- Positive view of community planning but should be used as a more challenging tool for communities
- Could facilitate communities to come together to discuss areas of mutual interest
- Fear that structure will just do what councils want
- Has to take account of an obligation for sharing - has to include community engagement
- Will take time and is not the final answer but helps to build relationships and promote engagement
- Community planning in border areas could include cross-border engagement, but this can be contentious
- Provides an opportunity to designate partners

e. Challenges faced in areas of contested space or interfaces

- There's a need for longer term planning
- The loudest voices aren't always the representative voices
- Failure to implement economic development opportunities has held communities back
- Some people living at interface areas don't want anything to do with paramilitaries but we have put paramilitaries in control over certain communities
- Diminishing resources
- Lack of inter departmental collaboration
- IFA: Limestone United is a project which uses football to bring together young males at a contentious interface area in North Belfast.

- Contested spaces create a fear for safety and security, but it's not just a policing issue. Engagement could be facilitated through Section 75 (NI Act 1998) statutory duties
- Cost of communities at interface is not socially recognised

4. Recommendations to support and enhance policy and decision making with regard to building a united community, against a backdrop of constrained financial resources

a. Challenges faced by constrained financial resources - how to do better with less

- Children and the hidden victims of austerity
- Models of good practice need to be sustained - otherwise risk losing expertise
- Duplication needs to be identified
- Could be more collaboration across groups
- Better collaboration across Government Departments
- A lot of the infrastructure is in place - need to make it more effective rather than create something new
- Need appropriate policy levers to ensure money is spent well (e.g. opening up a peace wall required traffic calming measures but was not straightforward to get the resources necessary to do this)
- Difficult for an outsider to challenge individual spending priorities within Departments
- Government is risk averse and resistant to creativity
- If you can nip things in the bud it's not always necessary to spend a lot of money
- Use existing infrastructure - e.g. youth work should make use of volunteers working together
- Ambiguity about what resourcing is - lack of clarity about the budget and the timeframe

b. Relationship between central government funding and other external funding bodies like PEACE, Atlantic Philanthropies

- Funding is piecemeal and the external funding is going
- Need to remove competitive attitude with regard to funding
- Need to streamline allocation of funding from Departments
- Needs to be a balance between central funding and private funding

c. The benefit of exploring common issues like parenting, tackling deprivation, environmental improvement

- Need for universal 'good relationship' education for young people - young people need to be taught about healthy relationships
- Programmes should not just focus on one part of peace building - it needs to be progressive and a route of engagement
- Brings communities together without the necessity of discussing differences and highlights commonality

d. Resourcing the strategy

- Executive needs to fund for change
- Need more funding for mental health and special educational needs
- We strive for perfection - we want everything in place before we start but we need to start somewhere

- Can there be a central government pot that Departments can dip into to support collaboration?
- Statutory obligations for T:BUC?

e. Measuring progress

- DoJ research - mapping people who live at interfaces from the cradle to the grave - an impact assessment which can be used as a basis for evidence with which to engage other Departments
- More information required - particularly important to highlight progress
- Provide access for civic society to ask questions - more connection with committee structures and MLAs
- Be more specific about the action plans in the long and short term
- Regular communication between the Committee and Ministers/Department
- More clarity about which Department is responsible for which actions
- Importance of case studies - not always numbers and facts
- The sort of change that T:BUC wants to achieve is hard to measure
- Interim evaluation to assess throughout - needs live feedback

Summary – Bytes Round table event

What good relations means to me **Opening remarks: Jessica Doherty**	
Some areas to explore: • Positive and negative experiences • What promotes/ hinders good relations between communities • Opportunities to engage with different communities	Majority of young people are not sectarian, although they do have that kind of vocabulary, because that is what they know • When they visit other communities, against expectations they find that they are just the same as the people they meet • It is hard to promote good relations between communities as workers don't know if they will get funding for salaries and programmes • Lack of long term funding for projects • Poor use of resources • There are different organisations but what work is done to assist projects to work together? • Cross-community schools work - adults are too stuck in their ways while children are more open-minded • BUC – struggling with young people • United Youth Program – what is its role? • Problems with consultations – there are very few and most of them, if not all, are happening in Belfast – people who are struggling with funding would not travel to Belfast • Discussions are often superficial and politicians are divided and do not have a good attitude • Need for more integrated schooling from an early age • Lack of shared history of the troubles being taught in schools to promote better understanding • Opportunities to engage with different communities through regular cross community trips, suitable and welcoming share spaces, more integrated education in interfaces • Politicians should support community workers on the ground

	• Living beside each other but few opportunities to meet other ommunity. Most leisure centres are single community • Lack of shared space to help in engagement with other communities although young people now using city centre as shared space • Need to look at issues from a younger perspective • People are scared to leave their own areas to get into Belfast - families shouldn't be scared to see each other • You should be able to walk through an area without looking over your shoulder • What is the world's perception of young people? • MPs and MLAs need to make an effort • Better use of education to promote diversity - cross-community trips throughout secondary school • Twaddell camp - how could the money to police Twaddell be used instead? • Residential experiences can be good but what if you meet someone you don't like? You're stuck with them. It's better to meet once a month • In Germany there are 3-week starter initiatives for trades • Invest in the estate - give children today what we didn't have • Invest in the youth club - a drop in centre to keep people off the streets • Sport - play football together; learn about each other's sports • If you don't play sports, use music or drama, hobbies or projects in activity centres • "If you don't do sports around my way, there's nothing to do" • We have a library but no one uses it • Informal educators should come out to youth clubs

Experience of living in interfaces **Opening remarks: Kenny Flood**	
Some areas to explore: • Experiences - positive and negative • Should peace walls be retained? • Should peace walls be removed? • If peace walls should be removed what work is required to make that happen?	Can't walk where you want to • Negative experiences all the time • If there's a band parade in the Short Strand, there'll be a riot • The flag: we didn't know it was there until it was taken down, then that starts trouble between Protestants and Catholics • Young people are not brought together enough: you have to bring them together earlier. Start in nursery • Parents are telling us things about the other side, but teachers would tell us better. All schools should be integrated. Children will educate the parents that the others are ok. • "I don't like the peace walls but I see the reason for them" • If you take the wall down between the Falls and Shankill there will be mayhem. The same for the bottom of the Newtownards Road • There are bitter Catholics and Protestants, but most are OK. • Still find living at interface frightening. Promotes bitterness and violence • Positive experience of discovering that not all Protestants are the same. • Security costs of Twaddell could be better used on promoting good relations • Perception that police let Twaddell protest go unchallenged but if nationalists protest they get arrested • Centre on Twaddell opposite camp which allows people to drop in and register how they feel that their rights are being eroded • If peace walls are to be removed the media must stop presenting only the bad news but also the positive ones. There is so much good happening (mixed community sport activities, community trips…) but media are not interested in publicising this. Maybe politicians can help promote the good work in communities.

	• Walls are not as important or as big problem as media present it. Yes people may feel insecure once they are gone but maybe it is the time to take a risk. • Clear walls may be the first step towards taking the walls down – as both of the sides of the community will see the other one – important realisation people just living their daily lives on both sides. (No matter the name you bleed the same) But need a recognised process to take this forward. • Do events - maybe open the gates for a couple of days and have a big event to encourage people to come and walk through. If you do open the gates, people need to be encouraged to go through them as they are so used to the gates being closed all day • An area like Ladybrook/Black's Road is a nice area - could maybe try there first • If you don't try you'll never know but it has to be controlled as you don't know how communities will react • Problem in this process is that people don't talk, firstly because they are used to not talking and secondly they don't feel heard • Need for a young person's forum rather than politicians speaking for them all the time • People are afraid to take a lift • Need to change people's mindset • We would not see integrated society any time soon but there needs to be consistency - i.e. consistent funding to ensure that projects are supported • Is it realistic to take down the peace walls in 10 years? Things are getting better - maybe 30 or 40 years • If the peace wall hadn't been up in the first place it would have been OK. But what about safety and security?

Involvement of young people in decision making **Opening remarks: Kevin Lee**	
Some areas to explore: • Expectations of involvement • Experiences - positive and negative • How best to engage young people - social media/organised groups/internet/formal or informal?	• "I'm not really interested. I'm not very bright about these things" • Choices are made by MLAs that affect the lives of young people • The government is too greedy, they make false promises • "I'm not really interested. I'm not very bright about these things". • Choices are made by MLAs that affect young people's lives. • The government is too greedy, they make false promises. • "We've been trying to set up a football pitch for years – we're only getting one now". There's no-one to talk to get a football pitch. • There needs to be investment in schools, youth clubs, community centres. • You're not old enough to make your own decisions when you are 16 or 17. • They should ask primary schools and secondary schools what is needed in the area. • People who have nothing commit suicide. • "When Welfare Reform comes, we'll have nothing". • There are invisible disabilities: alcoholism, mental health. • People from other countries should not get benefits. • You can communicate with young people through schools, in class, or by having a special day or event, for both primary and secondary schools. It's better with someone from outside coming in. • You can also communicate by a Facebook page – there are a variety of options, online platforms. • Good or bad experiences of government? "Haven't had the chance to experience government". • It is hard to be involved as a young person as they feel that government representatives are not listening to them

	• There should be regular meeting with young people and politicians maybe once or twice a year • Need for a young persons' forum rather than politicians speaking for them all the time • Housing – lack of involvement in decisions around social housing – so many homeless young people who do not have experience to know where to go for help. No fixed abode so cannot get job or involved in many community projects • Often the meetings which are held with young people are targeted at those in grammar schools and not those who have lower education or are coming with problematic background • No say in allocation of benefits • If the meetings tried to target all groups of young people it will be clear that there are problems such as: hard to get job with lower education, hard to pay university fees, maybe look at skill workload which is low paid, brain drain of young people • Young people between age 18-25 face very high level of unemployment • Young people are interested in self-employment, but there is not a lot of support especially for those with a difficult background • Work with organisations that are working with young people in daily situations and they know what young people need. Politicians should support these organisations and listen to them what may help the best. • Bytes is very good in supporting young people and helping them to get qualifications, apply for jobs, write CVs etc. But staff are often going out of their way to give up their own time and resources to help and support the young people • When you are trying to live on £50/week it is hard to think about other things. Looking for housing and looking for jobs takes up too much time • Invest in housing for young people

Recommendations for building a united community **Opening remarks: Aaron Corbitt**	
Some areas to explore: • Should common issues be explored like employment, skills, parenting rather than focusing on sectarianism • Where should resources be diverted from to facilitate programmes/ initiatives? • How should progress be measured?	• Communities must work together on new opportunities for employment, create more shared spaces and get a clear understanding of sectarianism • Unfortunately all consultations between community and government are done only by members of local organisations and not with young people • Often all forms and applications try to fit people into boxes – basically telling people who they are without asking who they think they are – before you can ask for funding • Communities need to learn to communicate rather than fight over issues – politicians giving a bad example in Stormont • Consultations with young people must be friendly and short, well organised • It would be great to see more youth projects – where young people have direct input and involvement, and in which they have ownership • Try to support existing youth clubs which are running for years – they know the youth in the local area – sadly lately many of them are closing due lack of funding • Security funding from Twaddell camp should be diverted to other programmes • Consider opportunities for employment of young people who don't have qualifications – look at their skills and try to give them hope of employment and help them to see some future • Create space for interaction – each area is unique and local organisations know their specifics and needs • Learn together – good way to go is integrated schools – with choice celebrate or start day the way each community will do • Don't forget there are more than Catholic and Protestant - there are other groups • Politicians bring young people in to engage and make a big fuss and then forget about it • Need some motivation - external groups like Bytes can help to support engagement
	• Just want peace and quiet - to live somewhere where there is no trouble • Shared space in all communities for all people to mix • Cross-community projects • Educate people in youth work • Sport, music and drama • People don't want to go into the other's areas - it has to be in the middle or in a neutral venue. • It's good to have your own beliefs: everyone is different • Learn your own history and the other's history • Trips to learn about each other's history - do a project • Need a way of staying in contact after a trip

Informal RCN Evidence - 11 March 2015

Committee for The Office of the First Minister
and Deputy First Minister
Room 285
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From: Kathy O'Hanlon - Clerk to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Date: 20 March 2015

To: Chairperson
Deputy Chairperson
Members

Subject: Inquiry into Building a United Community: Evidence from Rural Community Network

Background

1. At its meeting on 11 March the Committee heard evidence from representatives of the Rural Community Network on the issues facing rural communities with regard to the Inquiry into Building a United Community. During the meeting the Committee lost its decision-making quorum and while the meeting closed formally, the Chair continued discussion with the representatives in an informal capacity. Mr Attwood and Mr McIlveen were also in attendance.

2. A summary of the informal discussion is included below and Members may wish to include this information in the Inquiry report.

Summary Discussion

- The groups were questioned on whether T:BUC stretches communities to change the conflict rather than funding groups to do good work and manage the conflict. It was suggested that there is a disconnect between the top-down strategy and activity at the grassroots, and that T:BUC lacks the permission to innovate in terms of good relations activity. It was suggested that there is a fine line between 'stretching people' and social engineering.
- It was felt that the only stretch in T:BUC was around peace walls and that this reflected a lack of innovation throughout the document.
- Concern was expressed that those who are involved in good relations activity are 'aging and tiring out' and that there isn't a cohort of young people coming up behind to carry on the work.
- It was suggested that funding rural programmes can seem to be 'expensive' compared to urban projects because there is not the same density of population.
- The importance of definitions was emphasised and it was noted that there is no definition of good relations.
- It was recognised that at local level you can develop and take community relations forward if there is confidence to do so.
- There was concern expressed about what T:BUC might look like when the government departments are re-structured.

Department of the Environment correspondence re Living Places

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Your reference:
Our reference: SUB 346 2015

Date: 27 April 2015

Dear Kathy

Inquiry into Building a United Community and 'Living Places': An Urban Stewardship and design guide for Northern Ireland

In your memo dated 19 March you advise that the Committee of the First Minister and deputy First Minister are seeking information on how 'Living Places' connects in with the Executive's 'Together: Building a United Community Strategy' (TBUC). The Department's response is set out as follows.

The Department of the Environment published the award winning[1] 'Living Places: An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland' in final form on 18 September 2014 following Executive Committee agreement which was received on 19 June 2014.

'Living Places' is intended to assist in the planning process by clearly establishing key principles behind good place-making in order to inform and inspire all those involved in the process of managing (stewardship) and making (design) urban places, with a view to raising standards across Northern Ireland. It encourages developments that contribute to a positive sense of place; and highlights the wider benefits that can flow from successful stewardship and urban design, such as greater economic vitality; enhanced health and wellbeing; as well as social and cultural renewal.

It is considered that the 'Living Places' design guide connects with the intentions of the TBUC Strategy in a number of ways. 'Living Places' is focused on creating places that are

[1] 'Living Places' won a prestigious UK planning award for Placemaking in March 2015. The Place Making award ceremony was held on Tuesday 31 March 2015 at the Royal Institution, Albemarle Street, London. From over 200 entries, 14 projects across the UK were crowned winners at a ceremony attended by nearly 300 planning and regeneration professionals.

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INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

high quality, distinctive, sustainable, safe, welcoming and healthy, where communities flourish and enjoy a shared sense of belonging.

'Living Places' recognises that there are a unique set of socio-political circumstances prevalent in Northern Ireland and associated challenges and continued efforts to jointly resolve such complex issues. It advocates and provides, with reference to case studies, guidance on 10 qualities that are critical ingredients of successful places. These urban design and stewardship qualities, include 'vision' that recognises potential and the importance of strong leadership and place-making skills; 'collaborative' action and a shared strategic approach where the input of many individuals and organisations is a necessity for the creation of successful urban places; and 'Accessible' urban centres and public realm which must give careful attention to access requirements of the whole community. The importance of the provision of 'neutral' urban space is also recognised, not only for commerce and leisure but also as places to live.

'Living Places' is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in all urban areas. This design guide will ensure that the wider economic, cultural, and community benefits of urban design schemes are realised. The guide is a resource for councils, in consultation with communities, to use in the preparation of their local development plans and where appropriate has the potential to supplement and complement delivery of the TBUC strategy.

The Department also recognises that the planning system as a whole has an important role in supporting Government in addressing the issues highlighted in the TBUC Strategy, through its influence on the type, location, siting and design of development. Further clarification on how the planning system can contribute to the creation of an environment that is accessible to all and enhances opportunities for shared communities (including assisting with the removal of barriers to shared space) will be set out within the new Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS). The Department aims to publish the SPPS in final form in the near future following Executive Committee consideration.

I trust this information is of assistance, should you require anything further please contact me directly

Yours sincerely,

Greg Cunningham
DALO
[by e-mail]

cc Ciara McKay
Clerk to the Environment Committee

Research papers submitted by Professor Brandon Hamber

Professor Hamber submitted a number of research papers as listed below

- Tomlinson, M (2007) "The Trouble with Suicide - Mental Health, Suicide and the Northern Ireland Conflict: A Review of the Evidence"

  http://pure.qub.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/the-trouble-with-suicide-mental-health-suicide-and-the-northern-ireland-conflict–a-review-of-the-evidence(5e48890d-8851-404a-b9b0-8f7c6170148a)/export.html

- O'Neill, S, Ferry F, Murphy S, Corry C, Bolton, D et al (2014) "Patterns of Suicidal Ideation and Behaviour in Northern Ireland and Associations with Conflict Related Trauma"

  http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0091532

- Hamber, B Gallagher E (2014) "Ships passing in the night: psychosocial programming and macro peacebuilding strategies with young men in Northern Ireland".

  http://www.brandonhamber.com/pubs_journals.htm



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